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# Pictorial Photography for Amateurs

by

ROBERT H. GOODSALL, A.R.P.S.

Illustrated by 32 reproductions of the Author's Photographs

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TO  
THE MEMBERS  
OF THE  
CANTERBURY CAMERA CLUB,  
PAST AND PRESENT.



**The Sunlit Cloister**





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## INTRODUCTION

This small work is intended for the photographic novice who aspires to be something more than a mere "button-presser." Not only is photography the best of hobbies but it can become the means of artistic expression just as well as a pencil or pigments and brush. This fact is not always recognised by the beginner, with the result that he misses most of the pleasure of the craft. He continues to waste valuable materials and much time producing photographs which are at best nothing more than amusing or pleasing souvenirs of occasions and persons, or bald records of places having little or no interest except to those immediately concerned.

This is certainly not the way to get the best out of the hobby, and in the following chapters I have attempted to give the results of my own experiences in the use of a camera as a medium for picture making. Such small success as I have achieved has been the result of many years' work and countless failures. We can all profit by the mistakes of others, and I am hopeful that such advice as I am able to offer may help the keen amateur to work out his own salvation in the realms of photographic pictorialism.

If success should fail to crown his efforts he will at least reap a far greater harvest of pleasure from his photography than would be the case if he continued to "press the button" without thought of the result.

The photographs which I have used to illustrate these remarks are not put forward with any claim to their being works of art. They have been chosen because they happen to illustrate some particular point, and because they show how I set out to solve some particular problem. If they serve to suggest to the reader the right paths to follow in his own search for the beautiful they will have amply fulfilled their function.

## I. IS PHOTOGRAPHY ART?

LOOKING through the pages of a catalogue of artists' materials recently I came upon the following "*Oil Transfer Process*. This process which is the connecting link between photography and ART . . . . ." The capitals are mine.

I quote this because the attitude of mind is typical of the way in which many artists (i.e. painters and workers in some graphic medium such as engraving or etching) still regard photography. In the early days there was a natural jealousy on the part of engravers, and other artists employed in book illustration, directed against the new medium which so seriously threatened their calling.

Photography won the battle overwhelmingly as it was bound to, for no artist could compete against the ease and cheapness with which illustrations could be produced by means of process blocks. As a result the early Victorian school of line engravers—often very poor artists—disappeared and there was considerable heart-burning. Perhaps on the principle that the wish was father to the thought, many artists dubbed photography as merely mechanical and so not to be classed with the arts.

But times have changed ; the etched line, the wood cut, and the hand-produced colour print are coming into their own as a medium for the illustration of fine books ; while the process block, brought to a high degree of perfection, does what no hand process could do—gives mechanically accurate reproduction of any given subject or scene which may or may not be a faithful representation of an artistic conception. Concurrently with these changes there has arisen a School of Artist Photographers who use the photographic medium to produce works of art. The sceptic has only to visit a first-class

## PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR AMATEURS.

photographic exhibition to realise that many prints are true works of art, possessing as great a beauty as any line drawing or painting.

“That is all very well” the disbeliever will say, “but photography is a mechanical process which follows certain fixed rules and is the outcome of the correct use of certain materials. With reasonable care the worker cannot fail to obtain a photograph having a certain standard of technique whereas the artist, in producing a great work, does so by the cunning of his hands and brain alone ; mechanical aids do not enter into the problem.”

But surely the argument is at fault ? After all the thing which really matters is the result, the message which the artist has to convey. The medium by which he achieves this end is nothing, it is the conception which counts.

All artists must use a medium for the expression of their art and a high standard of photographic technique is acquired only by hard work just as much as facility in the use of brushes, pencil, or etching needle and acids. It is no argument to say that because photographs in their simplest form are easier for a novice to produce than a painting or drawing, that fine photographs are therefore less works of art than fine paintings.

As a humble professional follower of the mistress of all the arts, architecture, and as an amateur in photography, and other graphic processes such as painting, etching, drypoint and aquatint—I say unhesitatingly that the results I can produce photographically are just as satisfactory to myself as those which I am able to achieve in other media. The medium used, in fact, is merely a question of technique—a matter of manual dexterity and suitability—while the artistic conception of the subject remains the same a question of thought and temperament.

## IS PHOTOGRAPHY ART?

Furthermore the rules of composition which govern a work of art and by which it may be judged are the same for a painting, a pencil drawing, a print or a photograph—balance, light, shade, massing, chiaroscuro and colour all play their part irrespective of the medium.

To say, therefore, that a photograph cannot be a work of art is all nonsense and the artist who holds such views is surely unreasonably biassed?

In judging the relative merits of the various artistic media it must be remembered that photography is one of the youngest—roughly a century old. To what heights it is capable of soaring no man can say, but the position it holds to-day as an art medium argues well for the future.

In all parts of the world great photographic exhibitions are held annually which, by their international character and high standard, show how strong a position photography has won for itself. It is the most cosmopolitan of all the arts, possessing a universal appeal and is open to all who seek a means of artistic expression.

The mere fact that these big exhibitions can be held in the various great capitals of the world and made to pay their way shows that the popular appeal of fine photographs is just as strong as that of fine paintings or other pictures.

The time has come for those artists who still hold that photography is not art to reform their outlook and to work not against but with the photographer to create their graphic messages so as to reflect the modes and thoughts of our age. In fact many a painter or artist engraver would find in photography a valuable ally. An artist receives an inspiration concerning some particular spot, he has no time to transfer his impressions to paper by means of wash or pencil, but the camera will record them and serve as a basis for the work he can produce at his leisure. Why not? The result will certainly



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be no less artistic because in its production the camera played a part.

And so the message of my first chapter is to regard your photographic technique as a means of an end—the production of artistic matter. If it is not yet art make it so. The science of photography you can, if you wish, leave to the scientist ; work by rule to produce your results, do everything in your power to gain mastery over your medium and your mind will then be free to concentrate on the message you wish to convey.

Above all, remember that the final result—the print—may be as much a work of art as if you had used pigments or a pencil to produce it.

## II. WHAT IS PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY?

The first thing which a beginner does when some admiring relative gives him or her a camera—usually of the cheap box form—is to persuade the self-same admiring relative, and others, to repair to the back garden where a roll of films is wasted in record time. The book of instructions may or may not have been read, but as the instrument probably has a fixed focus lens and a snapshot exposure is given in each case the chances are that the results may be passable. Errors will follow all too quickly, but there is usually something in “beginner’s luck.” The D & P merchant will do his worst, and in a little more than twenty-four hours the A.R. and others will know exactly what he, she, or they “really look like.” This sort of thing is known as “button pressing,” and is all that 90% of those who own cameras ever attempt.

The remaining 10% realise that amateur photography holds much more fascination than this, and so come under a spell which generally remains with them for the rest of their lives.

Among the 90% there comes to some a feeling of dissatisfaction with the work produced. He or she feels that there is something lacking in the snapshots which result from idle button pressing and that the fault lies with themselves and not with the apparatus employed. The sign is a good one, for it shows unmistakably that the period of “button pressing” is over. Henceforward they become students and are no longer tyros.

This state of mind is most desirable, for it indicates that the worker has passed the point where he thinks only in terms of snapshots, and is ready and anxious to commence serious photography. He may still wish “to take the wife or the baby,” but this admirable intention will be supplemented by a desire to make the resulting work pleasing to the eye. He

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will realise that there is something wrong with the customary hard outlines of intense black and white—termed “soot and whitewash”—which spell under exposure and over development by the D & P merchant.

When the advanced worker meets a beginner who confides in him the fact that all his photography goes wrong and he is “fed up,” the advanced worker should pat his friend on the back and congratulate him, for the expression assuredly means another recruit to the ever-growing list of serious photographers.

The obvious question which confronts the beginner at this stage is “what must I do to make my photography pictorial?” Here is the crux of the whole matter, and it is by no means easy to express in so many words what makes art, *i.e.*, photographic art—pictorial. There are many and varied factors involved, and it may prove helpful to consider these.

It is a truism to say that artistic photography implies among other things good “quality” or technique but a photograph may be technically bad and yet gain a measure of success. The technique of some of the finest workers is at times open to criticism.

Needless to say the finest photographic art is always technically good, but because a print is poor in quality it does not necessarily follow that it is unpictorial. This knowledge should cheer the novice who takes his hobby seriously for, although he may lack the experience which makes for technical excellence, he can still hope to produce artistic work.

Perhaps the best way to discover what constitutes a pictorial photograph is to carefully compare two prints, one the work of the snapshotting tyro, and the other a carefully produced study by an advanced worker. The first will probably show crude lighting and modelling, faulty exposure—generally under exposure—bad massing, and absolutely no attempt at

## WHAT IS PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY ?

composition. If it is a landscape the sky will be represented by white paper, with the other high-lights intensely white and scattered in all parts of the picture, thus forming many distinct points of interest.

The “ quality ” of the serious worker’s print will be at once apparent, and the many attributes which help to make it pictorial will be obvious. Balance, beauty of composition, fine technique and, the most important characteristic of a truly pictorial photograph, rich tone values. The beauty of an engraving lies not in the intensity of its high-lights nor in the blackness of its shadows but in the subtlety of its half-tones and the soft gradation from light to shade. So it is in photography. The print which lacks detail in the high-lights and in the deep shadows can never hope to be pleasing. Only in the brightest high-lights—such as the reflection of brilliant sunlight on water or the sparkle of a jewel—should all detail be lost. Similarly a shadow should never be so dense that it is rendered by a single black tone.

It must be remembered that the scale of tone values possible in a photograph is extremely limited when compared with nature. To represent the highest lights the photographer has only the reflecting surface of white paper which compares very unfavourably with the sparkle of a diamond or the flash of sunlight on the water, while the other end of the scale, *i.e.*, black paper, has to be reserved for the most intense blacks.

The only hope of success lies in the correct exposure of both negative and positive. Over-exposure means that the high-lights lose their brilliance and the effect becomes muddy, while under-exposure results in undue loss of detail at both ends of the tonal scale.

Generally, though not invariably, the highest light should form the point of interest of the composition and the next strongest high-lights should be subservient to it. It is usually

## PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR AMATEURS.

a mistake to place the point of interest near to the edge or corner of the print. The deepest shadows may be in close proximity to it or there may be a gradual scale of tone values radiating from it. Neither should it be in the geometric centre. A fundamental mistake is to allow the corners of a picture to die off into light tones. A composition which is dark in the middle and light round the edges always lacks strength unless the key of the composition is exceptionally delicate. It is only necessary to study the work of the old masters of painting or engraving to realise this truth. Almost without exception it will be found in acknowledged works of art that the corners are darker than the centre.

Another important consideration is the general massing and proportions of the composition. Experience shows that a square print is seldom pleasing to the eye, and is generally the least satisfactory shape to enclose the subject. The truth of this is realised by photographic manufacturers who always make their plates and papers rectangular in shape, while no lantern slide worker who prides himself on his efforts would think of leaving his subject an unmasked square. Except for very unusual subjects ovals and other fancy shapes are the height of bad taste and should never be employed. Needless to say no two subjects ever require to be of exactly the same proportions. Sometimes the most appropriate form will be nearly a square, at others it may be necessary to cut the print until it becomes a narrow strip either horizontal or vertical, but there is little doubt that the most useful proportions are when two of the sides are about three-quarters of the length of the other two as, for example, in the case of a "quarter plate."

No definite rule can be laid down as to whether the greater length of the print should be horizontal or vertical ; the decision will depend on the main lines of the composition. If the



## 1. In the Wilderness



8. Wild Dykes, Amberley

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horizontal form is chosen the print should be placed with a considerable depth of mount below, that is to say, more than at the sides and top. I shall return to this point in Chapter XV.

The question of massing is one for which it is difficult to lay down any definite rules. Every composition must be considered separately on its merits. But there is that elusive quality termed balance which every picture worthy of the name must possess. How often one hears the expression " Yes, it is not a bad thing but all out of balance," which generally means that the arrangement of the masses of light and shade is at fault.

This question of massing or balance is one of the most difficult that besets the pictorial worker. Only the really experienced photographer can tell what effect a given subject seen in its natural colours will have when rendered in monochrome, for the brilliance of colouring is always misleading. Furthermore, the effect of colour rendering depends entirely on whether ordinary or panchromatic plates are being used and the type of filter employed with the latter ; the result in one case will be vastly different from the other.

As we have seen it is generally better for the centre of interest to be *toward* but not in the middle of the picture and the main lines of the composition arranged so as to lead the eye to it. Strongly marked lines which lead the eye in different directions are a mistake. For example, if we take a photograph of a brook and a road both of which disappear out of the print in opposite directions and at different angles, two separate points of interest are set up and the result becomes thoroughly unsatisfactory.

Lines which divide the composition into strongly marked equal parts, such as the horizon line in a sea-scape, should be avoided whenever possible. Curves are always more desirable than straight lines and those which follow some definite form



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are better than those which amble across the composition at random.

A sky should never be represented as white paper. The only conditions under which sky should appear "bald," to speak in photographic parlance, is when it is blue or grey with mist, and in both cases the effect will be rendered by tone. In the former case it is wrong if represented by a light tone, as the use of a panchromatic plate will readily show, while mist should appear as a soft grey half-tone.

Modern orthochromatic and panchromatic material is capable of rendering every possible sky effect and cloud formation and the power thus available to the photographer is of the utmost value.

Composition is a matter which cannot be reduced to rules. It comes by knowledge which is either inborn in the photographer or can be acquired by careful study of work of a recognised high standard.

This study of good photography may be carried out in various ways. Firstly, one of the illustrated photographic Journals should be taken regularly, preferably one which caters for the advanced worker as well as the beginner. The illustrations and criticisms will be invaluable. Secondly visits should be made to important photographic exhibitions such as those of the Royal Photographic Society, the London Salon, and the Scottish Salon, to name but three where the best work of the year may be seen. Thirdly, the aspiring beginner should become a member of a local society where he will meet others interested in serious photography and being able to see their work. It is also an excellent plan to join a postal club, which will afford an opportunity of viewing a portfolio of prints at regular intervals and benefitting by the criticism of the members. Regular contribution to a postal portfolio is of the greatest value as a means of improving one's work. Much may

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be learned from the Cinema. From a photographic point of view many modern films are of the highest pictorial excellence and are worthy of careful study. Finally an effort should be made to submit prints regularly to the competitions organised by the photographic press.

So far the various points considered are those which must be decided before an exposure is made but it is often possible to produce a pictorial print out of what, at first sight, appears to be an unpromising negative. This may be achieved by careful trimming, by selection when enlarging or by some control process, such as bromoil. Needless to say fundamental errors in grouping or lighting cannot be altered whatever subsequent treatment is adopted but much may be done in the way of subduing or intensifying high-lights or by "in printing" in clouds, etc. In this connection it may be well to mention the use which can be made of hand-work both on the negative and on the print. I have known cases where the judicious use of the retouching knife on a print to put in high-lights has been the means of pulling a composition together to a remarkable degree.

Although much may be done by hand treatment it is, after all, the negative which counts. A truly pictorial composition relies for its success on the worth of its original conception. If this is at fault no after treatment will remedy the defect. Aim, therefore, at composing your subject from the start ; be sure that your selection is sound before the exposure is made, and your chance of success will be immeasurably greater.

### III. LOOKING FOR SUBJECTS.

As soon as the novice has got beyond " the family in the garden " stage he begins to seek more ambitious subjects. This does not mean that the family is necessarily unpictorial, for a study of home life, particularly if it has some " story " appeal, may be a delightful picture, but that the " button presser's " photographic horizon has been enlarged and he perceives fresh worlds to conquer. " What shall I take? " is his slogan, to which might be added " what shall I leave untaken? " an almost more important question.

Any subject is capable of pictorial rendering by an expert, but many subjects which the 'prentice hand attempts turn out dismal failures because of the lack of experience in choosing the right view point and the right lighting.

On the other hand certain subjects are obviously pictorial and anyone with " half an eye " can see their possibilities. These are the ones to " go for " first. Many will turn out to be of the " pretty pretty " order, the sort of thing the " picture postcard merchant " attempts to immortalise. No matter. To make the attempt is a step in the right direction and discrimination will come later.

It is good practice to study the picture post-cards of your own locality and select a subject which is most characteristic, the old windmill, the bridge, the church steeple, or whatever it may be. Then set out to photograph the same subject differently. Not once but half a dozen times, each time from a different view point and aiming at a different rendering.

Let us suppose that your selected subject is the old windmill. How can you render it in six different ways? Let us enumerate them.

(1) First there is the conventional way, a good strong front light, nice sunlit foreground with the mill in the centre

## LOOKING FOR SUBJECTS.

of the picture. The sort of thing everyone goes for and which figures on the picture post-cards as " Old Mill, Blanktown."

(2) Now having achieved this, wait until there is the prospect of a good sunset. Place your camera on a stand, dark slides loaded with orthochromatic plates or preferably panchromatic plates and a filter over the lens. Mill towards one side of the picture and a fairly low horizon line. Give ample exposure.

(3) On the next sunny day try an early morning shot, low view point with strong side lighting. Focus sharply on the foreground having the mill placed high up and to one side of the picture. If it is summer, and you are lucky enough to find a cornfield near, added point may be given to the subject and the corn ears in sharp focus will make admirable foreground matter.

(4) In the fourth picture a feature might be made of the sky. Wait for a day when there are billowy cumulus clouds. Use colour sensitive plates and do not develop too harshly, so that the sky will print well.

(5) A stormy day of autumn, trees bare of leaves and bending to the gale, dark clouds scudding across the sky. The road leading to the mill water-logged with many puddles and perhaps a farm cart toiling towards the building.

(6) A clear winter morning, the ground covered with snow and snow lying deep upon the top and sails of the mill.

Here then are six interpretations of the same subject each one totally different yet, with the exception perhaps of the first, capable of being highly pictorial.

Most subjects may be dealt with in a similar manner, a number of exposures being made to give a different rendering, and I can think of no better training for the beginner than an essay of this description.

Excellent practice may also be obtained by setting oneself

## PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR AMATEURS.

a task such as the making of a pictorial photograph within a mile of home, and then carry it out. It is admittedly more difficult to "see" subjects among everyday surroundings than in strange places and a determined attempt will greatly help to cultivate the "seeing eye."

Soon the worker will find that he favours a particular type of subject which he treats in a way peculiar to himself. This is a step towards specialisation and the creation of a personal style, but at first the tendency should be checked. A child must learn to walk before he can run and it is equally necessary for the photographic beginner to first serve a general apprenticeship. Individual style will come quickly as his experience widens.

Of recent years there has been a tendency to praise work which is bizarre, curious or grotesque, without regard to its pictorial merit, and certain prominent exhibitions hold a reputation for hanging work of this character. Some of it no doubt is extremely clever, but often the obvious attempt to strain after cheap effect is only too apparent. The beginner should aim at producing straightforward pictorial work before wandering in the realms of the fantastic and ridiculous, for the experience gained in the former is the solid groundwork upon which to build up a sound photographic reputation.

A word may not be out of place here concerning photography of the nude. Opinions differ widely on this subject, but I think the view of the majority of camera workers is that the medium is less suited to the portrayal of the undraped human form than other vehicles of graphic art. Few if any human forms are perfect in all respects and the camera is literal. Photography is unable to select as the painter may do and as a result much nude photography degenerates into unflattering portraits of Miss So-and-so or Mr. Gymnast minus clothes. Lacking beauty the result becomes merely objectionable if not actually indecent.

## LOOKING FOR SUBJECTS.

I am perfectly willing to admit that a nude figure may reasonably be introduced into a composition to give point to some particular theme where the composition and "story" of the picture demand it, but the recording of the undraped human body just because it is nude can never be justified. All things considered, therefore, this class of work is best left alone by the ordinary photographer.

In subsequent chapters various types of subject are dealt with and it only remains here to emphasise the fact that pictorial matter can be found anywhere and can be photographed under practically any conditions given the necessary skill and, in the case of artificial light, the necessary illuminant.

The quality and character of photographic equipment has advanced enormously during recent years, with the result that subjects which seemed quite outside the scope of the average amateur can now be tackled with ease. Enormous aperture lenses make it possible to take instantaneous photographs in the ordinary light of dark buildings such as churches or halls and in the theatre by artificial light, while panchromatic plates and films bring the possibility of correct colour rendering within the means of all. Fast plate speeds and low priced reflex cameras open up the field of sport and other fast moving subjects, while the range of printing papers, particularly bromides and chloro-bromides, has been greatly extended so that all manner of attractive surfaces are available for varying subjects. Finally we have the infra red plate which has the almost uncanny ability of piercing fog or mist so that photographs may be taken of far-away landscape subjects which are quite invisible to the human eye.

In many ways photography is far easier than it used to be for those who will take sufficient trouble and will serve their technical apprenticeship wholeheartedly.

#### IV. SUBJECTS ABOUT THE CITY STREETS.

The worker who lives in one of our great cities and who rarely has an opportunity of spending a lengthy period by the seashore or in the country—except on the occasion of the annual holiday—often considers himself handicapped. His customary surroundings seem uninteresting and hackneyed and offer him little inspiration for work. It is a curious fact that scenes to which we are accustomed are always more difficult to treat pictorially than those which we encounter on our holidays and are consequently strange to us.

This perhaps is one reason why photography is regarded as a holiday pastime. There is no valid reason why it should be, and the city worker if he uses his eyes and imagination can find just as beautiful subjects as his provincial confrères.

Every town and city in the land teems with suitable subjects for those who possess the seeing eye. Many of these subjects owe their beauty to some particular condition of lighting, strong sunlight, mist, fog or rain.

The early morning is—generally speaking—the best time for work. The streets will be comparatively deserted and the lighting will be more beautiful than later in the day. If the sun is shining the shadows will be longer and thus offer better lines and masses for composition.

Ample exposure is absolutely necessary in street photography, and a stand for the camera is essential, unless a large aperture lens is fitted, for the secret of success lies in exposing for the shadows and allowing the high-lights to take care of themselves.

An attractive subject can always be made of some strongly lit, preferably light toned building, such as a church, forming the point of interest and seen through the vista of a street which is in deep shadow. Dark figures moving in the shade

## SUBJECTS ABOUT THE CITY STREETS.

cast by the nearer buildings will give added brilliance to the sparkling high-lights beyond. Avoid a central position for the point of interest, and see that the main lines of the subject lead the eye to it and not outward to the margin of the print.

Avoid too many figures in street photography or the result may be muddled, and particularly guard against pedestrians or vehicles moving across the field of vision ; they are almost sure to show movement or be caught in awkward attitudes. A figure seen striding across a street and frozen into suspended animation will entirely spoil the best composition. Catch your people advancing on to the camera or retreating from it, but best of all, when they are stationary. Awkward attitudes will then be avoided.

In this quest a reflex is of the greatest value, and is, in fact, the best of all cameras for street work. It enables the lucky owner to stalk his subjects, and watch the composition right up to the moment of making the exposure. Its principal drawback is that with a large aperture lens the movement of the rising front is apt to be restricted so that tall buildings cannot be dealt with satisfactorily.

Failing a reflex, a frame view finder is invaluable, but with care the small brilliant finder fitted to the average hand camera can be made to serve with success.

The keen photographer should always keep his eyes open for curious effects of light or atmosphere when travelling about the city on his lawful occasions. Subjects change from hour to hour according to the time of day and the weather, and when some peculiar and beautiful effect is noticed, a return can be made with the camera on a future occasion when conditions are the same.

It is an excellent plan to include in one's equipment a small vest pocket camera which can always be carried and used when the unexpected picture presents itself.



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Mist or fog are great allies in picture making in the city streets and the most drab surroundings often take on an entirely unaccustomed and unexpected beauty under such conditions. Orthochromatic or, better still, panchromatic plates or films with the appropriate light filter are a necessity for this work, particularly in the case of fog which is yellow in colour.

“ Into the light ” photographs seen through mist are always attractive, this subject being dealt with in the chapter on counter-light work. City streets are happy hunting grounds for this class of picture, particularly in the early morning.

Has it ever occurred to you what interesting compositions can be obtained from a high view point ? Some workers have made a reputation out of these high view point studies. The sunlit tree-bounded square, bathed in a riot of light and shade with perhaps a policeman in the foreground escorting a nursemaid and child across the wide carriage way and seen from an upper window, is a typical subject. Then again a group of kiddies playing before the entrance of some stately doorway, or a throng of people pressing forward towards the noble entrance of a great place of business offer possibilities for pictorial treatment. Such compositions may be curious as well as beautiful and are suitable material for those of an original turn of mind.

Roofs have a peculiar beauty all their own whether they cover the great buildings of a modern city or the jumbled homes of some medieval town, lines and curves and a pageant of light, shade and colour. I wonder how many pictures have been made of the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral seen across the city roofs, with the graceful spire of one of Wren's churches rising proudly in the foreground. It is a subject which can hardly fail in its appeal and the idea may be repeated in any town possessing tall buildings, a Cathedral tower or some lofty spire poised high above the surrounding walls.

## SUBJECTS ABOUT THE CITY STREETS.

In the early morning or evening when the shadows are long, city roofs are worthy of many exposures to catch their elusive beauty, while at dusk when the twinkling lights begin to appear in the windows below there is unlimited scope for original work.

Railway stations are always happy hunting grounds for those on the look-out for interesting subjects. Several classic photographs have been made from the pageant of life they provide: for example that fine War-Time study of F. J. Mortimer's "The Gate of Good-Bye" which mirrored the pathos of parting between the "Tommies" returning to the Great War and their dear ones. It was a great picture, and shows how camera art can compete with other media—particularly painting—in the portrayal of such subjects.

The life and bustle of a great station is so full of pictorial material that the difficulty is to know where to begin, for subjects abound on every hand. The trains themselves, the glistening lines and the play of smoke and steam are full of pictorial possibilities, but enough has been said to show that no one need lack subjects who is within easy distance of a large railway terminus.

Hardly a town or city can be found which does not stand upon a river of some sort, or at least is not threaded by a canal. Where there is water there will be found pictorial matter for the artist whether he be a photographer or painter. Think for the moment of the Thames with all its life and movement, the Pool of London and the docks. How many times this great waterway has figured in pictures it would be impossible to say, but at least it is certain that no photographer will lack inspiration who has access to the local river or canal.

Every city has its market, and the worker will find unlimited scope therein; groups of figures can be caught busy at their customary occupation and the result may be

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highly pictorial. There is something very attractive about these work-a-day themes.

Rain can be a great help to picture making. Wet pavements and roadways mirror the buildings above in a fascinating manner and are a joy to photograph. Work on these subjects is best carried out when the sky is clearing and the light is strong so that the full beauty of the brilliant reflections may be obtained. Naturally a good deal of foreground can be included and it is generally better to exclude the sky, particularly if it is "bald," *i.e.* without clouds.

Finally night photography should not be forgotten. It is a branch of work which can be carried out in the city streets better than anywhere else, but it requires a mastery of technique and patience which is not always available. Given these qualities it is a fascinating branch of the hobby which amply repays the time and trouble involved. Modern flood-lighting has opened up new ground for the night photographer and can be tackled with quite modest apparatus provided a time exposure is given and a stand is used.

Subjects should be chosen so that actual sources of light are excluded or halation will cause trouble, and streets in which there are lighted vehicles are certain to prove difficult as the moving lights will record as streaks across the plate. A brilliantly lighted corner, a silhouetted or flood-lit statue, or the entrance to some big building brilliantly illuminated are subjects which offer chances of success both technically and pictorially.

A wide aperture lens is of the utmost value in night photography and with an F.2.5 lens and really fast plates wonders may be achieved by a capable worker.

The hints given above hardly cover the fringe of possibilities which are open to the city worker, so full of pictures are the streets of our large towns. In fact, the dweller in the city need never think himself at a disadvantage compared with his country cousin ; his own opportunities are in reality just as great.

## V. SUBJECTS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.

Many beginners regard country-side photography as essentially a summer-time occupation. This is unfortunate because just as pictorial work can be done in the winter as in the summer while perhaps the best periods of the year are spring and autumn. During the former there is all the beauty of nature, reawakening after her winter sleep, to be recorded, while the glorious tints of autumn and bare branches of winter offer unrivalled possibilities for serious photography, particularly in the monochrome rendering of colour.

Any type of camera is suitable for this work. The elaborate reflex or the camera with a wide aperture lens offers no outstanding advantage over the cheap roll film instrument provided a stand is used with the latter.

The greatest aid to picture making in landscape photography lies in the use of plates or films with, of course, the appropriate colour correcting screen, which will truthfully render colour. As it is not the aim of this book to enter into questions of technique, the subject of orthochromatic and panchromatic photography cannot be dealt with here, but the reader will obtain all the information he desires by applying to any of the manufacturers specialising in this class of material or from any standard text book on photographic technique.

It is certainly well worth the trouble involved to gain a mastery of panchromatic negative making on account of the more faithful rendering this material gives. For example a field of buttercups rendered by a non colour-sensitive plate is a totally different thing from the same subject rendered by a panchromatic plate.

In countryside work, as in all other branches of photography, ample exposure is necessary for the best result. In fact the first commandment for the photographer should be, "Thou

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shalt not under expose." This point must be insisted upon because the greater number of cheap cameras are fitted with lenses working at apertures no larger than F.8 and often F.11 (U.S.8) and except at the height of summer and in strong sunlight these stops will give more or less underexposed results when the exposure is less than  $1/25$  second.

Unfortunately many amateurs will not be bothered to carry a stand and, as it is not easy to give an exposure of  $1/10$ th second (it can be done) in the hand without showing movement, a great many countryside photographs show signs of under exposure.

To give ample exposure is the first, last and greatest rule of photography, and, if you are not sure what it should be—only considerable experience can teach you this—carry an exposure meter. The most convenient form of instrument and one that is as accurate as any is the type provided with sensitive material which, upon exposure, tones to a given depth. The time this takes is noted and from tables provided the necessary exposure can then be worked out. Personally I have a preference for the Imperial Exposure Meter of this type which can be bought for quite a modest sum, but there are several other equally good makes on the market.

Landscape photography is one of the finest branches of the hobby because it entails healthful exercise in the open air and brings the worker in close touch with nature. Nothing can be more enjoyable than a ramble through some beautiful stretch of country with a camera on a sunny day or in the winter when there is the nip of frost in the air and it feels good to be alive.

And what of subjects? Well! There will certainly be no lack of them, but the task of selection should not be hurried, and it is well to remember that the best subjects can only be found by walking. It is no good rushing about the main roads in a car or on a motor bicycle expecting to find suitable

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material, the best "bits" are always hidden in by-ways, far from the madding crowd, and need to be searched for on foot.

In the choice of subjects several pitfalls must be avoided. In the first place colour is most deceptive—more so perhaps in this branch of photography than in any other. A scene may owe its charm to colour alone and when reduced to monochrome the result is apt to be most disappointing. Always remember that it is the lines of a composition which count. If you can find a subject in which the main lines compose well the actual colours of the scene will not matter very much.

Another pitfall is the wide panorama type of subject. You have perhaps climbed to the top of some commanding hill and turned back to gaze on the chess-board-like scene of rolling country stretching far away to the horizon. It gives you a thrill to look down upon the world, fields of many hues, the gold of ripening corn, the deep green of some crop, or the rich brown earth which the plough has recently turned, dark clumps of woodland, clustering roofs of distant villages or a far-away town enveloped in a blue mantle of smoke, and beyond the indefinite outlines of the purple distance while above all a blue sky stretches from horizon to zenith. It is the sort of view to make you catch your breath in sheer wonder at the beauty of nature and you have an irresistible desire to record it by means of your camera. You do so with the feeling that if all the other exposures made that day are failures you have, at least, achieved one success.

Unfortunately in 99 cases out of 100 disillusionment will follow. The print will look insipid and ordinary and not a bit like your memory of the scene. The chess-board fields are uninteresting patches, the distant township can hardly be distinguished, the villages are difficult to trace, you have lost all suggestion of that altitude to which you so laboriously climbed, and the deep blue of the sky is represented by white

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paper. If you are wise you will scrap the negative and hurl the print into the waste-paper basket.

Such a subject is for the painter more than the photographer (unless he is engaged in colour photography) and is one of the most difficult to treat in monochrome. Pictorially it can only succeed in one of two ways, by choosing a strong foreground as the centre of interest, or by making a feature of a cloudy, sun-flecked sky. A near-at-hand figure may serve to throw back the distant landscape into its proper planes, and so give the impression of space and distance.

Beware then of the distant view or you may easily waste perfectly good photographic material. But if the "big" scenes are difficult to portray the beginner need not despair, there is so much else in the countryside to photograph which is well worth the trouble.

The cornfield on the hillside with the reaper whirling merrily behind a sturdy team—what scope there is in such a subject. What a picture you can make of those fine shire horses, two bays and a white toiling up towards the high sky line, above which ride the billowy white clouds of late summer. You know the scene, so homely and lovable in its message that its repetition can never tire. It tells of hot summer days, of quiet farmsteads nestling in rich valleys, of old creaking windmills perched upon the hill tops, the great sails straining to the breeze, of the sweet smells of the countryside, and the glorious climax of the year—the time of harvest. Mirror this and you picture a world truth as old as time, you are on safe ground here.

And then what pictures can be made around the old country buildings, the beauty of which it seems so difficult to reproduce in modern day work; the old water-mill, with its merry music, and the groaning windmill crushing the golden grain, are objects of beauty which afford ample scope for



9. A Way-side Tomb, Palestin





14. Old Cairo



15. The Afternoon Game



16. The House of the Marabout

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original treatment, simple or theatrical according to nature's mood.

Perhaps your steps will carry you along the bank of some quiet river, the limpid water flowing leisurely past meadows in which cattle browse. This is Britain at her best and a fitting subject for the artist. Or it may be a joyous mountain stream rushing gaily to the sea, miniature cascades bubbling among the boulders which lie strewn across the bed. Here is a more difficult subject, for it is not easy to photograph rushing water without making it appear frozen, but the result is well worth attempting.

Out on the broad downs other material awaits you. Mainly the appeal will lie in the air and space and sky. A low horizon line and the vault of heaven alive with hurrying clouds seems best to fit the mood, beauty of line and form will make up the composition.

At evening perhaps you will meet a flock of sheep herding along some dusty highway backed by a riotous sunset sky. This will be a chance you must not miss.

If it is a late autumn day you will do well to take your camera to the local meet, the scent of the wet earth will be in the air, and the breeze will whistle through the bare branches as away they go—huntsmen, hounds and field over the fields and across hill and dale to the sound of the horn, the hounds giving tongue and the joyous tally-ho ! Follow as quickly as you can and be ready for the pictures which await the making. When you return at eventide to the cheerful fire and the well earned rest turn to the pages of Masfield and read again the story of " Reynard the Fox " so that you may live the day once more.

If the morrow should be snowy a new world lies ready for picture making, full of subjects which come but rarely and must be caught before the thaw works a change.

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There is magnificent material for the photographer when the snow is on the ground, the due reward for those who keep their cameras ready for use through the winter months.

Landscapes under snow are deceptive things, owing to the unusual degree of light contrast. This is a snare for the unwary and unless great care is taken under-exposure will result and shadows will lose all detail, while the high-lights are rendered as blank paper. On the other hand over-exposure will assuredly degrade the white purity of the snow and the result will appear muddy. The moral is to use an exposure meter and not to carry development too far. If plates are being used they should be backed to guard against the risk of halation, while colour sensitive or panchromatic material may be employed with advantage if the sky is blue.

Subjects must be chosen with care. A large expanse of freshly fallen snow in strong sunlight seldom makes a pleasing foreground because it tends to lack texture, but if it is well ridged and the subject is taken against the light the shadows will give attractive detail and better suggest the snow mantle. Where a strong foreground line is needed to help the composition this may often be found in the form of cart tracks. Lacking these it will suffice to walk across the snow once or twice and so *draw* the necessary line.

Farm implements, gates, tree stumps, hedges, etc., all are suitable foreground matter of great pictorial value.

Generally speaking snow scenes under dull light make disappointing photographs. The sun causes everything to sparkle and throws delightful shadows which are full of pictorial possibilities. When the sunlight comes the opportunity should be seized immediately, for in our climate snow so quickly turns to slush (it is only on rare occasions that we get frost immediately after a fall of snow, at any rate in the south) and much of the beauty of a snowscape departs when a thaw

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sets in. The early morning is perhaps the best time to work, for then the shadows are long, but many beautiful effects may be obtained at sunset when the landscape is snowbound.

Care must be taken that subjects are not too spotty in composition owing to dark masses of trees, buildings or other permanent objects. Snow makes everything else appear dark by contrast and the white paper of a print is a poor substitute for its brilliance. This is why woodlands, and subjects in which there are many trees, need to be treated with great care to avoid a *worried* result.

Figures, either in the form of human beings or animals, may with advantage be introduced into snow scenes provided their character is in accord with the composition, while many a pleasing picture full of life may be obtained where skating or tobogganing is in progress.

## VI. SUBJECTS OF THE SEASHORE.

Photography by the seaside, always a popular branch of the hobby with the amateur, requires above all things care with the exposure. Subjects must be amply exposed, but it should be remembered that the light over the sea is much more actinic than inland and consequently considerably less exposure can be given. The moral of course is to use an exposure meter as advised previously.

Generally speaking all marine photography should be carried out in sunshine, although certain subjects such as storm-swept skies over angry seas by their very nature entail dull light, but to attempt work on a dull cloudless day, when all the joyous light and sparkle on sunlit water and beach is absent, is to court failure. This is true of most out-of-door photography and particularly so at the seaside ; yet how often we find hopeful novices gaily snapping away with their cameras in the most dreary weather without the slightest hope of success. For the washy lifeless prints which will inevitably result, the "developing and printing merchant," the material, or the camera will be blamed in nine cases out of ten when in reality it is the exposure which is at fault.

Most seashore photographs are taken in holiday mood and it is often well to let the holiday spirit enter into the message they convey. This does not mean that they need be any the less pictorial on that account. Jolly photographs of bathers, the kiddies, and the general happy life of the beach can be made highly pictorial if care is taken in presenting the material properly and in following the laws of composition. Unfortunately ninety per cent. of amateurs' seashore photographs are no more than unimaginative records of no interest to any one but their producer and his victims, and then only on sentimental grounds. Think for a moment what a joyful picture can be made

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of a group of kiddies scampering over the wet sands aglow with rippling light from the countless ridges towards the idly lapping water. How easy it is to catch this wonderful pageant of young life, the lazy heat of the summer day and the rich vital reflections. It is a subject which has often been done but it is always well worth the doing. A somewhat similar theme is a group of shrimpers seabooted wading knee-deep in the water and pushing their great nets before them, or a party of fishermen landing the catch from the boat.

In some places fishing is carried out from the beach by means of a very long net dropped from a boat which rows in a semi-circle from the spot where the ropes attached to each end of the net are brought ashore. When the net has been cast for some time a number of helpers, men and women, lay hold of the ropes and pull it to land. Here is a fine picture, the workers straining at their toil as they gradually move up the beach and then the rising excitement as the last length of net is pulled in, and the small patch of water which it encloses seems alive with movement from the frantic struggles of the imprisoned fish. This is the sort of thing which makes a splendid photograph if done well.

Then of course there are the bathers to be photographed, fair bathers mostly, and unless considerable care is taken, these subjects may degenerate from the pictorial to the merely "pretty pretty"—the sort of thing which delights the readers of the illustrated Sunday press.

Rocky coasts afford great scope for serious work. Giant ocean rollers pounding a rock-bound shore and throwing the spray high into the air are subject matter which few of us can resist. But it is not easy to do this sort of thing well, the water may appear frozen into a lifeless mass and unless colour sensitive plates are used the deep blue or green of the water, the tone of the sky and the clouds will be lost.



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Those who aspire to produce studies of the nude will find a fitting background among stretches of deserted rocky cliffs. I have already remarked on the subject of nude photography, but here it may be repeated that there can be no objection to a distant nude figure forming a point of interest in a composition portraying nature in her wilder moods. A small undraped figure dancing before some great natural cavern might well form the subject of a picture of the romantic or mystic type, and in no way be an outrage on good taste.

High view points often give scope for the effective treatment of the coast line below ; chalk cliffs, such as those seen between Beachy Head and Dover, form excellent essays in tone rendering and a test of the photographer's technique. If for no other reason such views are well worth attempting.

The local harbour is always a happy hunting ground for the pictorial photographer. Whether it be a large commercial port, or some quaint fishing haven, the worker is certain to find therein no lack of subjects around the quayside or in the basin.

Usually the collection of masts and ropes, to say nothing of the lines of hulls and quayside, are so numerous that care must be taken not to include too much or the composition may become involved or muddled.

Unless the subject is a group of masts or funnels seen against a background of clouds it is generally safer to exclude the sky from harbour scenes. A bright patch of sky may by contrast kill all other tones and is therefore best omitted. Reflections are one of the greatest charms of harbour scenes and may well become the feature of one or more compositions, for this is a type of subject which can be achieved by a camera better than by any other graphic medium. The amazing beauty of intricate reflections when well rendered is a thing to marvel at.

In a commercial port, smoke and steam will play an

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important part in many compositions. This is another subject which photography can render supremely well, a volume of black smoke belching forth from the funnel of some snorting tug, or a cloud of white steam hissing from the winches unloading a cargo have great possibilities.

Quieter havens will probably contain groups of small fishing craft, gay with their red-patched sails; these should be studied for the best view points and lighting.

Finally, there are the groups of workers to be caught at their toil or their leisure, the fishermen mending their nets or their boats, the sailors lazily smoking and chatting after the day's work or waiting for the sailing of their boat upon the full tide, the lighterman busily engaged unloading cargo—all life, colour and movement.

Most seaside towns hold yacht races during the summer months, and the brave spread of glistening, white canvas against the deep colour of the sea and sky always makes an attractive picture. Such material demands quickness of decision and action if the best pictorial arrangement is to be caught. It is generally necessary to make use of some small craft to convey one to the scene of operations, for in most cases racing yachts keep out some distance from the shore. When a suitable position has been selected it is necessary to wait for the vessels to group themselves into a suitable arrangement, and the moment they are so arranged the opportunity must be seized, for the relative positions of the craft change with great rapidity. Those possessing a knowledge of seamanship will find it most valuable, as it enables a record of events to be made with greater certainty.

One of the greatest pictorial difficulties of all marine work is that of dealing with the horizon line. A strong horizontal line which divides a picture into two parts is always a fault of composition and, in the case of seascapes, great care must be taken

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to minimise its effect by other strongly marked lines. Racing yachts heeling over in the breeze generally give fine oblique lines which may often be emphasized by the wash from the stern. These should be the main lines of the composition and dominate all others including the horizon.

In passing it may be well to stress the necessity of carefully trimming seascape prints. Nothing looks worse in such a photograph than a horizon which is not horizontal.

A fine picture of sea and sky may often be obtained from shipboard, particularly if the former is rough and the latter is broken by bold clouds. The gulls which follow in the wake of a steamer offer useful points of interest against such a background.

Shipping entering or leaving port is always attractive but unfortunately the modern steamer is not nearly so picturesque as the old-time "windjammer." The latter is disappearing all too fast, and it is rarely these days that the opportunity comes to obtain a photograph of a great three-master in full sail. Those lucky enough to get the chance should not miss it, for there is no more entrancing sight to be found on the high seas than a big sailing vessel with all her canvas set.

## VII. PHOTOGRAPHY AT SUNSET AND SUNRISE.

A good sunset or sunrise photograph, if well done, is always attractive, but the translation into monochrome of the glowing colours and brilliant light of nature is by no means easy, and the result may easily degenerate into "soot and whitewash."

Success, as in all other branches of photography, depends upon two things, correct exposure and the use of colour sensitive plates and light filters.

The actinic value of light at dawn and sunset is often very misleading and this is the cause of many failures ; a snapshot of perhaps  $\frac{1}{25}$  sec. more often than not results in a dead black foreground entirely devoid of detail and a theatrical sky which is a libel on nature.

Shadows must be luminous and the sky should exhibit all the soft tones of gradation which are to be seen at this time of day. Err on the side of too much exposure, work out the correct time with an exposure meter or, failing this, give a  $\frac{1}{10}$ th,  $\frac{1}{5}$ th or even more at F.8, according as the colours are yellow or deepening into red.

If possible use panchromatic plates for this work, with of course the appropriate filter or, if and when available, panchromatic roll film. The longer exposure necessary will entail a stand, but unless there is a high wind and the cloud forms are changing very rapidly, this is no drawback. After all if a photographer is sufficiently keen on his hobby to try to produce pictorial work he will not mind the additional trouble involved in carrying a stand.

For those who feel inclined to do much sunset and sunrise photography it is well worth while taking up a natural colour process such as the "Finlay," "Autochrome" or "Agfa." The former is the successor to the "Duplex" and "Paget Colour Processes," a medium used extensively some years ago. It has

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the advantage over other colour processes that the negative is not turned into a direct positive and consequently can be used for the production of monochrome prints as well as any number of colour plates.

The only difficulty in using a colour process for subjects such as sunsets is that the exposure may be as long as two or three seconds or more and consequently the clouds or position of the sun may show movement. The solution is to use a large aperture lens which will cut down the exposure to within reasonable limits.

Sunset photography is an all-the-year-round occupation. Winter subjects are likely to be just as many and attractive as those to be obtained in summer and nothing is more delightful than a picture of the sun setting behind a bank of clouds above a snowbound landscape.

The variety of sunsets is endless. In her kaleidoscope of colour nature never repeats herself and for this reason no branch of photography is more fascinating. On one occasion a sunset will express the glorious peace of departing day while next evening the sky may be alive with ominous thunder clouds, the theatrical setting of a giant stage. Moreover sunsets vary according to the latitude in which they occur. The peaceful conclusion of a summer day in England, with cattle grazing lazily in sweet scented meadows and an old-world church spire rising darkly against the beauty of the sky, is a very different picture to the afterglow which heralds the coming of an Egyptian night. Both supremely beautiful, but in totally different ways.

At the hour of sunset it is not only the western sky which is full of beauty, the whole vault of heaven is alive with light and colour, and there are often just as beautiful cloud formations to be seen in the east or north or south as those which gather about the setting sun. This is particularly true when

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there is thunder in the air ; great steely-edged clouds bank up in tumbled masses from horizon to zenith and are lit by a wonderful yellow light while beyond the heavens appear as the deepest blue. Such a subject offers magnificent pictorial material. As the sky is naturally the centre of interest a low horizon is usually best, broken if possible by trees or buildings so that the line may not be too pronounced.

Sunset photographs are always improved if water can be included in the foreground. A river or pond reflects in deeper tones the beauty of the sky, and often assists the composition by affording curving lines which help to minimise the effect of a strong horizon line.

Sunsets over the seashore fall into this category. Particularly fine effects can be obtained in places where the ebb tide leaves a large expanse of wet sand or mud. The reflections of the vault above will be split up into numberless points of light by the ripples on the surface left by the receding waters. If there are small craft lying high and dry on their sides, their hulls and masts will form most useful foreground matter.

Finally it must not be forgotten that very fine sunsets are witnessed at sea. Success pictorially on such occasions is a matter of chance, for it is not possible to compose the picture in any way and one must accept the view provided from the deck of the vessel in which one is travelling. It rarely happens that another craft is anywhere within the field of view at the psychological moment when the exposure is made. It may, however, be possible to use the objects on the deck or to pose a figure against the taffrail to afford an interesting foreground.

The photography of sunsets is a much more popular pastime than the recording of the dawn, for the simple reason that most of us lack the necessary energy and enthusiasm to rise with the birds. It is however an effort for which the energetic one will be amply repaid. Dawn is generally far more

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beautiful than sunset as anyone whose business necessitates his being awake in the early hours of the day will testify and the joyful freshness of the early morning is an experience well worth the trouble involved in rising early.

During the Great War I once had occasion to travel on a native boat from Assuan to Edfu by night and the beauty of the sunrise above the mountains of the western desert was an experience I shall never forget.

The hints already given concerning sunsets apply equally to the photography of sunrises. Colour corrected plates and light filters are just as necessary and a camera stand should always be carried. If by any chance after your early rising suitable cloud formations should fail you, the occasion need not be wasted, for the long shadows of early morning will give effects of tone and mass to the landscape which can be caught at no other time of the day and no doubt will afford ample scope for artistic treatment.

## VIII. COUNTER LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY.

The novice commencing photography is usually told to turn his back to the sun when making his exposures. This is sound enough advice for the worker who does not understand the possibilities of his medium, and it is perfectly true that to point a camera lens straight at the sun and to make an exposure will certainly result in a fogged plate. It is, however, quite possible to take photographs into the light with complete success and a noticeable gain in pictorial effect.

Full-on illumination in which the light falls directly on to the subject photographed is the most inartistic form to adopt. If portraiture is being attempted, such an arrangement means that the light source is full in the sitter's face, with the result that he or she must necessarily screw up eyes and face muscles in a painful effort to counteract the glare, also the modelling will be flat and uninteresting. A portrait taken under such conditions cannot possibly prove a good likeness. Similarly a landscape photographed under front lighting loses all suggestion of perspective and distance. A side lighting is much better and for portraiture is perhaps the best, but for certain subjects nothing can equal an "against the light" treatment.

At first sight it may appear to be inviting trouble to take photographs into the light, but the difficulties are really more apparent than real. The secret of success lies in remembering that the source of light must not directly strike the lens. This danger may be guarded against by the use of a lens hood, or by taking up a position so that the cast shadow from a tree trunk, building, or other obstacle shields the lens. Failing such fortuitous aid the services of a companion may be enlisted to hold his hat or a book in such a position that a shadow is cast across the front of the camera. With the necessary protection



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against fogging provided in any of these ways it is perfectly safe to make exposures directly into the light.

Another essential of success, and again I must repeat the advice, is to expose amply. Under-exposure will inevitably cut out shadow detail and rob the high-lights of all gradation. The whole beauty of counter-light work lies in the great range of tones extending from the brightest points of light to the deepest shadows which this form of illumination gives. So vast a tone range is something which photography more than any other art medium can render superlatively, provided that the technique is not at fault. Unfortunately many efforts fail through lack of exposure. It is also important to remember that backed plates should be used to guard against halation. Films of course are not so prone to this trouble.

Counter-light subjects are numberless; almost every object, no matter how prosaic or ugly, becomes a thing of beauty when seen against and surrounded by a halo of light, whilst many a portrait owes its charm to having been lit from behind.

Kinematographers discovered this truth long ago and it may come as a surprise to those who have never considered the matter to realise how many "shots" in a modern film owe their beauty to this form of lighting. The next time you go to the "talkies" just notice how often this form of illumination is used and with what excellent effect. It will prove an object lesson in the art of photographic lighting.

Subjects may be found anywhere but some subjects are more suitable than others. Narrow lanes or alleyways with the sun streaming into them, veiling the distance in a mantle of shimmering light, and a figure or figures placed appropriately in the foreground, will be found particularly attractive.

In this sort of picture it is best to exclude the sky altogether, either by selecting a view point from which some overhanging portion of a building or similar obstruction

## COUNTER LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY.

obscures it, or by subsequently trimming the print, for a bright patch of sky is apt to attract to itself too much attention and thereby degrade the subtle tones of the sunlight.

Good counter-light subjects may be found any sunny day in woodlands and forests where the effect of the strong light streaming through the overhead canopy of leaves and branches is one of great beauty. The seashore too offers many possibilities, particularly wide stretches of wet sand, when the tide is out and the surface is alive with burnished points of dancing light. A group of small paddlers, a party of bathers, or some fisher folk returning to shore with their nets will provide the necessary foreground interest.

Perhaps the most difficult of all counter-light subjects are those where a view of distant country or buildings is seen through a doorway or similar opening. The enormous difference between the deep shadows of the foreground and the brilliantly lit distance presents a tricky problem in exposure. Yet it can be done successfully—the secret lies in ample exposure and development for a soft negative.

I well remember in my early photographic days a keen amateur who maintained that he could take such “into the light” subjects as views through windows or doorways without backed plates and yet produce negatives entirely free from halation and having perfect detail in the shadows. He was a man with a great command of technique and herein lay the secret of his success. Not all of us have the same faith in our powers and therefore it is always best to be on the safe side and either use backed plates or films.

Delightful portraiture may be done with a window or doorway as a background. If it is possible to use an opening which does not embrace a direct view of the sky, but looks out on to a distant belt of trees or shrubs, the task will be easier as the tone range will not be so great.

“ Genre ” is a French word derived from Latin “ genus ” meaning “ kind.” Painters have applied it to subjects of a domestic and homely character where a figure or figures are engaged in an everyday occupation. Photographers use the word to express the same type of subject. “ Genre ” work is a particularly fascinating branch of photography and one in which artistic expression can be given full play. It differs from ordinary portraiture in that the motif of the composition is concerned more with the occupation and costume of the sitter than the character as expressed in the face.

There are two ways of approaching this type of work—in the studio with models or actors dressed for the part and posed appropriately, or by finding and photographing real subjects in their natural surroundings either in or out of doors. The latter presents considerably less difficulty.

“ Genre ” work in the studio, whether it be in a properly equipped apartment with the usual provision of backgrounds and control of lighting or in an ordinary room, requires above all a model or models who can be relied upon to appear absolutely unconscious of the camera. This requirement is by no means easily found, for at least fifty per cent. of sitters are camera conscious and any suggestion that the figures are acting is fatal in this class of work.

Similarly the posing must be perfectly natural or the effect will be theatrical. To achieve this the models must feel “ at home ” with the task they are supposed to be performing. This is not to say that arrangement and posing should not be attempted, but only that when it is resorted to the effect shall appear natural. An advantage in studio work is that different schemes of lighting may be tried to give any particular effect it is wished to portray.

## “ GENRE ” WORK.

No branch of photography gives greater scope for personal expression than studio “genre” but it is a branch of art which requires special aptitude and a close study of detail. The story conveyed is everything and often the telling relies upon small details. A figure may be engaged in violent physical movement which can be represented as arrested motion and certain poses do this better than others. For example, if a workman is using a sledge hammer the artistic effect is greatly enhanced if the hammer is seen poised in mid-air rather than at the end of the blow, while if the subject is a boxing match it is far more effective to represent one of the antagonists recoiling from the extended arm of his opponent than to show them in their respective positions at the commencement of the blow.

Sometimes photographers invade the realms of the painter and attempt essentially painter’s subjects—themes suggested by poems, myths, Biblical or other history and so on. Now and again such subjects may be strikingly successful but the work requires perfect technique and a high artistic sense if it is not to appear cheaply theatrical.

Nevertheless much may be learned from the study of good paintings, etchings, and engravings, particularly the old masters. The Dutch and Flemish Schools are rich in fine “genre” work and will well repay careful study. Among Dutch Photographers, Richard Polak has shown what may be done in following the footsteps of his nation’s masters of painting by the delightful studies of domestic life in Holland which have made his work famous.

“Genre” photography of unposed subjects in natural surroundings is much easier than studio work and is a branch of the hobby at which every amateur tries his hand at some time or another. Hunting for good subjects provides all the excitement of the chase with the added attraction that it may

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be followed anywhere, in town or country, at home or abroad.

As in the case of studio work, success comes all the quicker to those who possess a special aptitude for feeling the story-telling power of any particular subject. Some people possess "flair" for spotting pictorial possibilities and seizing the opportunity quickly. Those fortunately gifted in this way will do well at "genre" work.

It is a good thing to try and develop this aptitude for spotting likely subjects even upon occasions when a camera is not carried. Some groups of figures make a picture, others do not, and the ability to know instinctively the right ones to take will prevent the waste of much good photographic material.

Human interest counts for a great deal in this work and next to sound composition it is the "story" the photographer is able to tell which makes for success. Very often a well-chosen title will help in this respect, but it must be remembered that a title never changed a mediocre print into a work of art.

There can never be any lack of subjects, for "genre" work is the portrayal of every-day life in all its homely details. Suitable subjects are generally more easily found when on holiday, particularly in foreign countries, than at home. Scenes and people which we pass every day have lost all novelty, and it is difficult for us to realise that they possess any pictorial qualities, but strange sights appeal to our pictorial sense immediately by very reason of their novelty.

Nevertheless it is quite possible to train oneself to recognise the picture-making possibilities of the common scenes of every-day life at home, and by so doing we shall be able to obtain a great deal of pleasure from our hobby throughout the year instead of at the holiday season alone.

A reflex is undoubtedly the most useful type of camera for

## “ GENRE ” WORK.

out-of-door work, its only fault being its bulk, which is difficult to hide and may lead to camera consciousness among our “ victims.” Otherwise it is an ideal instrument, for it enables the photographer to watch and compose his subject on the screen up to the last minute, and to make the exposure at the exact moment when everything is right.

This is not so easy with the folding type of camera. A small brilliant view-finder is a difficult thing in which to compose a picture satisfactorily, while there is always the difficulty of focusing accurately by scale when perhaps it is necessary to move quickly into a position to obtain the desired grouping. It has, however, the advantage of being less conspicuous and may often be hidden from the models right up to the moment of exposure. This is of great importance, particularly when dealing with children, who generally become camera-conscious the moment they realise their photograph is to be taken. A stand camera is quite out of the question for “ genre ” work, except when the models are purposely posed.

Personally, I have always found it best to photograph models when they are entirely unconscious of my intention. The results then bear the stamp of naturalness which it is very difficult to obtain if the sitters realise they are being photographed.

To this end it is most important to hide the camera until the last possible moment. My usual practice, after I have spotted a likely subject, is to assume interest in something in the opposite direction. Gradually I edge my way towards the strategic position necessary for action and then quietly swing round and make the exposure before any of the “ sitters ” realise what is happening.

Crowds are the most difficult subjects to deal with. There is always some miserable “ hanger-on ” who spots your intention and insists on watching the camera, and so entirely

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spoiling the composition. It is hopeless to expect that his interest will flag—it won't, and the only thing to do is to pack up the camera and walk away in disgust. Then, with luck, he will forget all about you, and you will be able to return and try again.

For “genre” subjects I favour a skyless background because the lightness of the average sky may detract interest from the figures. A side or back lighting should be adopted on account of the greater richness of tone to be obtained thereby when compared with front lighting.

If the principal figures can be picked out by differential focusing, it is often an advantage while, failing this, it is sometimes possible to find a figure or figures which dominate the rest, either by reason of occupation or dress, and so become the point of interest.

This is illustrated by the plate “The House of the Marabout” in which, by sheer good luck, I was able to catch the white-robed natives in just the right position. It is not always that fortune is so kind.

In concluding this chapter, I would again emphasise the importance of the print plus the title, telling a perfectly clear story. In “genre” work the story and character are the two fundamental qualities of success—first, last and always.

As this work is intended for amateurs I assume that the average reader will not have access to a proper studio and that any portraiture which he attempts will be done out of doors or in a room.

The unflattering productions of the average "button presser" snapped out-of-doors can hardly be called portraiture at all. They fail pictorially through lack of knowledge and bad technique, although they may be perfectly good mementoes of the occasion.

It is well for the beginner to remember that the camera is not everything in the production of good photographs. A skilled worker will produce excellent results using the cheapest form of box camera on the market—because he knows its limitations—while the novice is no more likely to turn out good work with an expensive instrument than he could with his modest "Brownie." Probably the work of the latter would be the best.

But in portraiture it is certainly true that the very simple and cheap type of camera is not the ideal equipment for the job, principally because the focus is fixed or at best can only be adjusted by scale or supplementary portrait lens, the focal length of the lens is too short and consequently gives false perspective, and above all because the small lens aperture will not permit of short exposures indoors.

As a means of learning what not to do, try the effect of taking a photograph of some obliging relative lounging full length on the back lawn. Place the camera about a yard away from his feet and just high enough to see his head comfortably. The result will show a pair of enormous boots or shoes and a small head out of all proportion to his body. The effort will not be wasted, because the photograph will amuse the



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family and will serve to demonstrate to the photographer one of the pitfalls of a short focus lens.

If such a lens is the only one available (and the lens fitted to the average cheap camera is unusually too short for portraiture) the difficulty can be overcome by adopting a more distant view point than would naturally seem to be required and making an enlarged print from the resulting negative. By this means foreshortening and distortion will be avoided.

Lighting plays an important part in successful portraiture and for this reason it is more difficult to obtain satisfactory results out-of-doors than indoors.

Most out-of-doors portraits fail through being lit by an "alloverish" light resulting in general flatness and lack of modelling and if the unfortunate sitter has to gaze at the source of light, *i.e.*, the sun, his or her expression can hardly be normal. A bright but not sunny day will avoid this difficulty, but it may unfortunately result in flat lighting.

It is more satisfactory to choose a day when the sun is slightly veiled by clouds and a spot where a cast shadow from such an object as a tree trunk affords the possibility of screening the sitter's face while at the same time providing a strong lighting to the surroundings. Whatever expedient is adopted it is important to so arrange the lighting that roundness is given to the masses and the face contours are shown up.

A common fault of out-of-door portraiture is over dark flesh tones due to under exposure and/or too bright a background. It is generally better to have the background darker rather than lighter than the face tones ; similarly dark clothing is more easily dealt with than light.

Backgrounds require to be chosen with great care. Anything of a spotty nature should be avoided as it will inevitably detract interest from the sitter. A brick wall in sharp focus is perhaps the worst that can be imagined and almost as bad as

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spotty foliage. The sky should be omitted from the field of view unless the result is intended to be a figure study against a natural background rather than a portrait. Artificial backgrounds of curtains or some other fabric may sometimes be pressed into service, but they require careful handling if they are not to appear obtrusive, while such aids can only be employed on windless days.

Out-of-doors the best result is obtained by using a lens of large aperture and placing the sitter well forward from the background and focusing on his or her eyes. The surroundings will then be completely out of focus and with care any stray high-lights may be toned down by handwork on the negative or print.

Out-of-door portraiture has the advantage over work indoor in that a short exposure can be given and the risk of movement is minimised. This is particularly valuable when the lens available works at F.8 or a smaller stop.

Indoor portraiture is a branch of photography which possesses the advantage that it can be practised at any time of the year and, by using an artificial illuminant as described in Chapter XI, it can be undertaken at any time during the day.

A large aperture lens is of the greatest value because it reduces the necessary exposure to within reasonable limits and gives the power of differential focusing whereby the background may be separated from the sitter and obtrusive detail toned down. A stand, of course, is necessary and a camera which can be focused by means of the image on a ground glass screen almost so. I do not say it is impossible to turn out good work with a cheap fixed focus camera, or one which is not provided with a focusing screen, but the chances of success are considerably lessened.

If much portraiture is to be undertaken it will repay the worker to purchase an old focusing camera of the "bellows

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type"—not necessarily a studio camera, a field instrument will do admirably—which can often be picked up second-hand, for a mere song.

A lens working at F 4.5 or larger is a great asset. Personally I employ one of the new large aperture lenses working at F 2.5, and I find that I can obtain effects which would be possible by no other means ; moreover, in a well-lighted room exposure is cut down to little more than a snapshot, *i.e.*, " cap off, cap on."

The greatest difficulty of portraiture indoors is the lighting, particularly when the room has a window or windows in one wall only. A room with windows in adjacent walls is far superior.

The difficulty with a single source of light is that a harsh " soot and whitewash " effect is produced, the most inartistic form of lighting imaginable.

This difficulty can be overcome by the use of reflectors. Any white material will answer the purpose, a dust sheet, large pieces of drawing paper, or even an unpainted artist's canvas (if it is big enough) placed in such a position that it will reflect the light from the window on to the unilluminated side of the sitter, and at the same time is out of the field of view. Sometimes two or even more reflectors placed at different angles may be required.

Electric lamps on the end of a length of flex, particularly if they are powerful, are very useful to " ginger up " the lighting at any particular point, and to act as spot lights. Sometimes an electric lamp may be used with admirable results to illuminate a fair sitter's hair from behind.

The main sources of light—the window—should face north if possible, as the illumination is likely to be more even and diffused from that quarter. Failing this aspect however, it may be necessary to diffuse the light by means of a piece of







19. The Mukhtar of Surafend





21. Jews' Wailing Place, Jerusalem

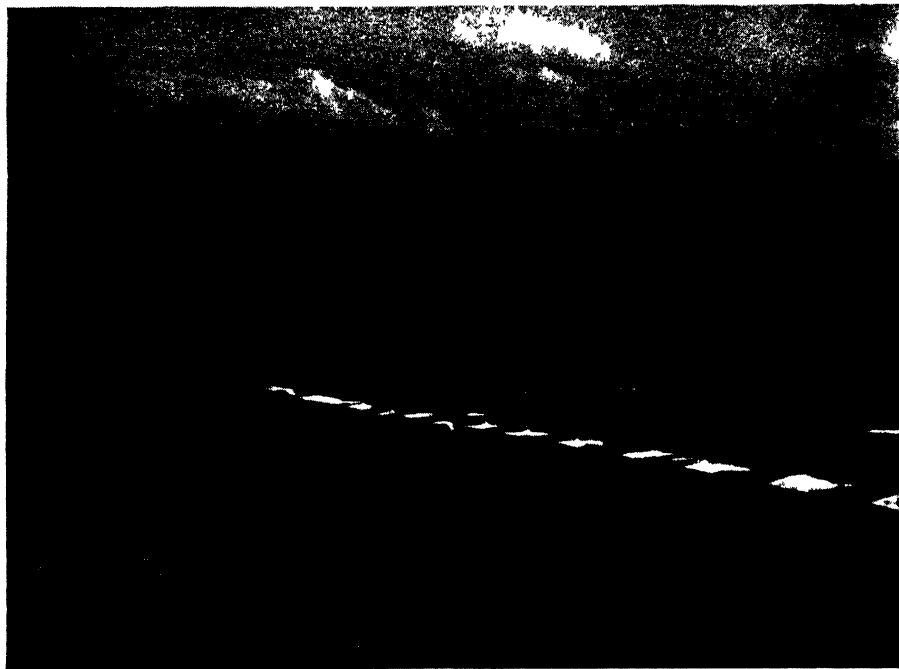




22. South Transept, Canterbury Cathedral



23. The Buddha



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tissue paper pinned across the lower part of the window and by controlling that from the upper part by means of a blind.

When there are two or more windows cross lighting may cause trouble and various arrangements should be tried to ascertain the best effects. Curtains and blinds may be pressed into service to shut out the light where it is undesirable.

As previously pointed out the greatest pitfall the amateur has to contend with in portraiture is the short focus lens which gives an exaggerated perspective. A pose which would prove perfectly satisfactory in a painting may very well prove a failure when photographed. Unfortunately when working indoors it is not always possible, if the room is on the small side, to get far enough away from your model to counteract the effects of a short focus lens. It is therefore most important that the figure should, as far as possible, occupy one plane. For example it would not be satisfactory to take a "close-up" of a seated figure whose knees and hands project directly forward towards the camera, for they would appear abnormally big in the print. With the model turned sideways this effect would not be so apparent.

The more natural the posing the better will be the result. It is fatal to fuss about the sitter particularly if he or she is liable to be camera-conscious. Pictorial portraiture relies for success primarily upon characterisation. The aim should be to catch the personality of the sitter.

A photographic friend of mine, who was a most successful amateur portrait worker and afterwards became a professional, had a method of work which proved highly satisfactory. First he decided where he wanted his model to stand or sit and arranged the lighting accordingly. The sitter was then invited to enter the studio and take up a comfortable position in the spot indicated. "Forget you are having your photograph taken and get perfectly comfortable," he would advise. "Then

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I want you to think of someone in whom you are particularly interested. You must think hard, concentrate, and when you have conjured up a mental picture of that somebody say 'ready' and I will make the exposure." He never posed his sitters and never looked at them while taking the photograph. The results he obtained were often strikingly characteristic.

If you come to think of it there is a good deal of sense in this method of work. People left to themselves will naturally adopt a characteristic pose, entire absence of fuss puts them at their ease, while making them concentrate on some particular line of thought helps them to forget they are being photographed.

Of course it is necessary to keep a sharp look-out for any specially awkward arrangement of limbs or poise of head. Composition is just as important in portraiture as in any other branch of photography. Some lines or arrangements are more pictorial than others, and if a sitter adopts a hopelessly inartistic pose it must be remedied, but the less the photographer tries to "arrange" the model the better.

Hands are always a potential source of trouble. The short focus lens may make them unduly big, they may upset the balance of the composition, and above all they may appear as undesired points of interest and draw attention from the face. This is a danger which must be guarded against.

Backgrounds require careful study. It is assumed that, as the work is confined to the home, that abomination—the painted studio background—will not be used. Generally the amateur's first thoughts fly to a curtain of some sort. This may prove a snare for the unwary, as folds in the material, which cause heavy shadows, often have a way of asserting themselves unduly, and entirely spoil the restfulness of the background. The creased white sheet often employed by the

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novice is about the worst possible thing to use, particularly if rendered in sharp focus.

A plain papered out-of-focus wall area is about the best background which the average home provides. The sitter should be placed as far away as space permits, and the larger the lens aperture which can be used, the less the background will be in focus. An unobtrusive picture, out of focus and but dimly suggested, is often of considerable value in occupying a vacant stretch of wall space and may help to balance the head in the scheme of composition, but other furniture should be introduced with caution. Above all avoid bright objects which will tend to cause high-lights in competition with the main point of interest—the face.

Portraiture is such a big subject that it cannot be dealt with adequately in these notes and, in any case, success cannot be guaranteed by following a given set of rules. Experience is the only teacher, and if you would learn what *not* to do, look through some Victorian albums of unfortunate victims of the professionals of those days, grandfathers and grandmothers, uncles and aunts in uncomfortable positions and-impossible surroundings. On the other hand much may be learned by a careful study of the present-day society papers in which the work of leading exponents of the art are reproduced. Above all, visit the best photographic exhibitions and see how success in modern portraiture is achieved.

## XI. ARTIFICIAL LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY.

Several times in these pages I have emphasised the fact that photography is an "all the year round" hobby, and there is no reason why the practice of so many beginners of packing their cameras away for the winter should be followed.

Many subjects, as I have tried to show, can be obtained as well, if not better, in winter than in summer, while however poor the daylight, photography may still be carried on by means of artificial light with every hope of success.

Artificial illuminants available to the amateur are of two forms, magnesium ribbon or powder, and some form of electric light.

Magnesium ribbon burns comparatively slowly, and for this reason is most useful when it is desired to move the source of light during the exposure so as to diffuse the illumination. Magnesium powder or "flash powder," gives an instantaneous and vivid flash. There are quite a number of "gadgets" on the market for igniting and burning magnesium which makes its use practically safe even in careless hands, but employed in its loose form it requires careful handling to avoid accidents.

The light is so intense that it is usually necessary to arrange a muslin screen as a diffuser between the position of the flash lamp and the object to be photographed.

If this form of illumination is chosen it is best to purchase a good flash lamp or other apparatus for burning the magnesium and to follow the makers' instructions with regard to quantity, so as to get the correct exposure. When a satisfactory exposure has been obtained, the condition, *i.e.*, amount of magnesium, distance from model, etc. should be noted for future reference.

Flashlight photography may be employed for portraiture, "genre," still life and record work. The mistake most fre-

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quently made when used for portraiture is to have the light source too low. It should be at least a foot above the model's head, in fact the higher the better—within reason. As previously remarked a diffuser will obviate hard shadows and that staring expression displayed by so many sitters when photographed in this way. The posing, use of reflectors, etc., are the same as when working in daylight, with the exception that no top reflector will be necessary in a room with a white ceiling which itself will reflect a large amount of actinic light.

The position of the flash should be level with the camera or slightly forward of it, but not sufficiently so to reflect on the lens or a fogged plate will result. By varying the position of the flash in relation to the sitter and the camera any number of different effects may be obtained in one room. In any case the light should not be too close to the model, for it is this, combined with a low position, which so often gives a strained unnatural appearance to flashlight portraits.

If the subject is a group of figures, or a large still life arrangement, it may be necessary to use two or more flash lamps, one of which should be considerably nearer the subject than the other. The flashes must be fired simultaneously, and professionals employ an electric spark to effect discharge at the same moment. Amateurs of a scientific turn of mind may be able to rig up two or more motor-car sparking plugs or other electrical sparking device to achieve this end.

When using plates of average speed, say 250 or 300 H. & D. at F.8, or smaller stop, it is generally safe to ignore the ordinary illuminations of the room, provided no source of light shines directly into the lens. The plate can be put in position and the lens uncapped ready for the flash without fear of a ghost image.

Ultra-rapid plates, large aperture lenses and modern high candle-power gas-filled electric lamps make it possible to



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entirely dispense with magnesium illumination, except for very large subjects.

For work in an average sized room I use plates marked 750 H. & D., a Taylor Hobson Cooke 2.5 lens at full aperture and a "Focustite" lamp giving somewhere about 1,000 c.p., with a 100-watt Ediswan gas-filled lamp or lamps to light up any dark corners. Exposures vary from 3 to 10 seconds according to the position of the lights.

The great advantage of this illumination is that the subject may be focused by the same lighting as that employed to take the photograph with the result that the actual effect can be seen and judged. Moreover there is no fear that a sitter will shut his or her eyes or blink at the critical moment owing to the anticipation of a sudden intense flash.

So much for technical details. Now as to subjects. A simple and interesting branch of photography which has been very popular in the last few years is the making of silhouettes. All that is needed for this work, in addition to the camera and light source, is a sheet of white cloth stretched tightly across an open doorway. Against this, on one side, the sitter is arranged in profile and, on the same side, the camera is focused. The light source is placed on the other side of the sheet and fired or turned on when the plate is in position and the lens uncovered. The negative, of course, is developed fully to give the necessary "soot and whitewash" print.

The results may be very quaint and interesting but they can hardly be considered pictorial. There is, however, no reason why some striking results might not be achieved by illuminating the model on the camera side as well as from behind and so modifying the complete silhouette effect.

Arrangements of curtains and a very low source of light may be employed to give the appearance of stage photographs

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with considerable fidelity. In subjects of this nature the more theatrical the arrangement the better.

Fireside studies of the "pretty-pretty" order are very easily produced by means of artificial light. The light source may either be placed in the grate of a real fireplace or by careful screening from the lens, and using hearth curb, fire irons, etc., the fireplace may be suggested without being shown.

Artificial light is particularly useful for subjects of the problem picture order such as "The Fallen Idol," a famous Academy picture of bygone years, or the subjects with which the late Sir William Orchardson delighted our Victorian parents, "The First Tiff," "Her Mother's Voice," etc.

Groups are particularly attractive subjects to tackle although by no means easy. They may range from the essentially homely subject, the family circle enjoying a wireless concert or collected round the living-room hearth after supper, the party of club members listening to a yarn or discussing some knotty point, or some elaborately set dinner table after the repast, with the diners sitting over their port and cigars. In this class of subject the models count for a great deal in the final success, sitters who fit the character of the part are needed. Careful study of the "talkies" will help in this respect.

Still life subjects may be taken by artificial light as well as by daylight and in some respects the former is more desirable as the source can be moved about until the best modelling is obtained. Needless to say subjects which give high reflections require backed plates to prevent halation or else films should be used.

Artificial light will be found particularly suitable for table-top work, which is dealt with in Chapter XII. The models being usually quite small, the light can be brought

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to within a few feet, and by reflection can be concentrated easily on any desired spot. In short, the possibilities of artificial light photography are endless and will provide an interesting occupation for many a long winter evening, while this form of illumination offers great scope for striking and original effects.

## XII. ARCHITECTURAL & STILL LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

Architectural photography covers a wide field, from simple record work to the essentially pictorial. Architecture naturally forms the background for all photography in towns and may play an important part in the composition of country subjects, but when taking such pictures we are usually concerned with portraying the character of the spot, the people who inhabit it or some particular effect of atmosphere, rather than the making of a faithful record of the actual buildings.

In architectural photography the buildings form the theme of the picture and it is quite possible to make such work pictorial as well as true record. Good technique is absolutely essential to success. In many other branches of photography technical correctness may sometimes be ignored without spoiling the result; for example in a landscape the camera may be pointed slightly upwards instead of using the rising front, but the distortion of perspective which results will not be noticed. To do the same thing with an architectural subject would merely invite failure.

The first essential then is to use a camera with a rising front giving a liberal amount of movement; if it has a tilting back so much the better—it may prove useful in certain cases. A stand should be employed on all occasions, and the base of the camera should be plumbed with a spirit level, to ensure that it is not tilting upwards. Cameras which have only scale focusing can be used but they are not to be recommended. It is always better to focus each subject on a ground glass screen and to compose the picture there rather than in a view finder of any form, for it must be remembered that no view finder will tell correctly the effect of using the rising front, and good work may be entirely spoiled by cutting off too much or too little at the top.

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A wide angle lens will prove of the utmost value if not an actual necessity, for in architectural work space is often restricted so that with a normal lens it is difficult to include all that is desirable; furthermore, as the rising front will often be brought into play the lens must be one that will cover amply, or blank corners will result when it is used out of the centre. The camera should be simple in design and rigid so that there is no fear of movement from vibration during long exposures.

Except for work in busy streets there is no advantage to be gained by using ultra-rapid plates while panchromatic plates or films are only necessary when it is desired to make a special feature of the sky or where brilliant colours play an important part in the decoration of the building.

It is always best to adopt an oblique view point in relation to the main façade of the building being photographed as the modelling will show up more clearly, and if taken "flat on" projections lose scale and value.

A reasonable amount of foreground should be included for it is easy enough to trim away that which is not required. Eye level, *i.e.*, about 5ft. from the ground, is the best height to use the camera for it will give the most natural impression of the building's size. A very high view point may result in a striking effect but the chances are that it will be more or less unnatural.

Much may be learned from a study of the high class weekly or monthly journals which make a feature of illustrating fine architecture, such as *Country Life*, and they will show how easy it is to make a record truly pictorial by selecting a good view point, striking lighting and including a fine sky as a background.

Areas of walling which would appear most uninteresting in a photograph taken under flat lighting conditions may be things of great beauty if recorded when the sunlight is falling in

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nearly the same vertical plane so that it glints across the surface, and every irregularity of bricks or masonry throws a shadow. Under such conditions the texture is seen to the best advantage.

Care must be taken when choosing a position that the lines of the building compose nicely and particularly that no main constructional features, such as lintels or arches, are cut off by the boundaries of the print without adequate support, or a feeling of instability will result.

When dealing with internal views a wide angle lens becomes more than ever necessary as the position of the camera is naturally governed by the confines of the building, but it must be remembered that with optical equipment covering a wide angle there is a risk of distorted perspective.

Windows may prove a source of trouble in photographing interiors. If possible light should be excluded altogether from the field of view or else, where practicable, covered during a greater part of the exposure. In buildings which contain numerous constructional features, such as columns or piers, it is often possible to take up a position where these screen all direct sources of light. When plates are being used they should always be backed.

Determining the correct exposure to give is largely a matter of experience, for many interiors are so dark that an exposure meter which relies upon the darkening of sensitive paper takes an unreasonable time to operate, and therefore cannot be used.

In public buildings people moving about may cause trouble and the art of capping and uncapping the lens during exposure without causing movement to the camera should be learned. In dark buildings which call for long exposures moving people may be safely ignored provided they do not stand in one position too long.

## PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR AMATEURS.

Side view points give more pictorial results than central ones; for example, if the nave or aisle of a Cathedral is being photographed the lines will appear more pleasing if seen from one side. In fact in interior work the view point is everything, for one cannot alter the lines of the building and it is generally not possible to alter the lighting. Those who contemplate making a speciality of architectural photography will find it time well spent to gain a knowledge of the rudiments of the historic styles of architecture, and such knowledge besides being extremely useful will add greatly to the enjoyment of this branch of camera craft.

Photography of still life subjects may be carried out either indoors or in the open but generally such work can best be done under cover. If daylight is to be employed the subject should be arranged near a window with a muslin, tissue paper or other diffuser placed across the bottom half and a blind above. Suitable reflectors arranged on the opposite side of the subject will give complete control of the lighting conditions. Any form of artificial light as described in Chapter XI may be employed if preferred.

In the case of flowers it is not always desirable to show the vase which contains them, a few blooms may be supported in a narrow necked bottle by wire, or pieces of strip lead bent to shape can be used. Where the support is shown it may be desirable to merge the background into the table on which it stands by bringing the background material, cloth or paper, in a gentle curve from the vertical to the horizontal. More often it is better to use a highly polished table which will show beautiful reflections. Above all avoid an obtrusive table cloth or spotted background. The same remarks apply equally to fruit but whatever the subject avoid over-elaboration; simplicity is often synonymous with beauty, and taste counts for much in achieving success.

## ARCHITECTURAL & STILL LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY.

As I have remarked elsewhere one of the greatest advantages of photography as a hobby is that it may be carried out at all times of the year and equally well by artificial light as by daylight.

Another advantage is that we need never be at a loss for pictorial material with which to engage our attention. Suppose for example that it is winter time, the weather is abominable and we are at a loose end for something to do. Everyone around us is bored to tears, but there is no need for us to join the circle of "Les Miserables." Nothing is easier than to get out the camera and try our hands at the amusing occupation of table top photography. The time will then fly like magic, and we shall quickly forget the wretchedness of the weather without. Moreover the work may be carried out in a humorous or serious vein just as we wish, so that it is adaptable to any mood.

Subjects range from simple still life groups to the grotesque or frankly comic, while if we have a taste for nude work and lack models we may realistically counterfeit the real thing by using small wax fixtures instead.

Then again a group of objects may be used to express a story. An opera hat, walking stick, gloves, decanter and glasses of wine suggest the title "After the Opera," or a mirror with powder puff and scent before it might be called "Vanity Fair."

Finally you may allow your humour to run riot with such objects as "Bonzo," "Mickey Mouse," or other comic animal, or some grotesque idol or doll may be made to appear distinctly funny when shown in quaint surroundings. In short table top photography offers unlimited scope for those of an original turn of mind, and may result in highly pictorial work as well as proving very fascinating.

As an essay in composition, nothing is finer practice than the arrangement of table top groups, while the correct



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rendering of various textures and surfaces often provides a ticklish problem in technique. A lighted candle, reflections from a bowl of water, cut glass, jewellery and bright metal require considerable skill if they are to be rendered in a realistic manner. In short, in this branch of photography, technique counts for a great deal in achieving success, while the lessons to be learned concerning composition and lighting will prove of great value when work out-of-doors is attempted.

### XIII. PHOTOGRAPHY WHEN TRAVELLING.

The acquisition of my first camera—of box form—coincided with my first trip abroad when I was a youthful schoolboy, a good many years ago now. As I have been travelling and taking photographs at intervals ever since, I can fairly claim to have run against most of the troubles which beset the photographer on holiday in “foreign parts.” The object of this chapter is not so much to speak of pictorial photography, the canons of which are the same all the world over, as to give a few general hints gleaned from my own experiences and misfortunes so that others may perchance profit thereby.

My first piece of advice is to keep your equipment as light as possible. My earliest work abroad was done, as I have said, with a box form,  $\frac{1}{4}$ -plate camera. This possessed the limitations of its kind. The lens was of small aperture and inferior, plates had to be used, and the metal sheaths often stuck in the process of changing with the result that all subsequent exposures were spoiled, or, if one guessed the cause of the trouble, work had to be suspended until it was possible to use a dark room. Worst of all, only twelve exposures could be made without changing the plates in a dark room (usually the hotel bedroom at night or under the bedclothes). All this was obviously unsatisfactory.

My next camera was a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -plate folding camera fitted with double dark slides and having a good R.R. lens and a focusing screen. This was a great advance and enabled some useful work to be done. The great disadvantage was that D.D. slides are bulky, and several dozen plates take up a lot of room and weigh heavily in one's luggage. Moreover, it was not easy to obtain  $\frac{1}{4}$  plates on the Continent in pre-war days.

During the war I served in Palestine and Egypt and in addition to a Vest Pocket Kodak that I took out with me and

## PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR AMATEURS.

which did yeoman service I bought a cheap 2A size folding roll film camera. Films were hard to get in those days, but somehow I generally managed to obtain a few rolls of one of the two sizes and I eventually brought back with me several hundred negatives.

This period taught me the value of films when the transport of weight is a consideration, and my prejudice against this material was finally broken down.

After the war I acquired a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -plate Sanderson field camera with D.D. slides for colour work and a film pack adapter. This offered the advantage of comparative lightness in weight, all necessary movements, compactness, and general reliability, but it was not ideal for "genre" work in which quick composition and focusing is so necessary. Good "genre" subjects are so often met with abroad where their strangeness makes an instant appeal to the traveller that, when I went to Syria and Palestine in 1925, I decided to take a reflex.

This was a most unfortunate decision, for the camera let me down badly. It was a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -plate instrument fitted with a very large aperture lens, for previous experience told me that many of the narrow and highly picturesque alleyways of eastern cities are impossible photographically on account of the bad light. This necessitates a large stop, while the moving crowds demand short exposures. Fast plates and a big stop I hoped would solve this problem. But I reckoned without the human element and the climate.

A reflex wants knowing and handling and I had done little more than "try it out" before leaving, a foolish mistake, for I ought to have known better.

My first trouble occurred over the size of the case which was considerable. Customs officials at Naples, Athens, Constantinople and Beyrut insisted upon calling it a "valise" and demanded to see the contents. Then its value was assessed, questions asked and the matter referred to higher authority,

## PHOTOGRAPHY WHEN TRAVELLING.

all of which took time and was trying to my patience. Particularly so when my wife's folding camera and those of friends were passed without comment.

The second trouble I did not discover until I developed the negatives upon my return. In many cases these showed signs of movement due to hurried and careless exposure and also because they were taken immediately after some unusual exertion, such as hurriedly ascending the steps of the Propylæa to the top of the Acropolis at Athens, or climbing some rugged hillside, or mountain path in Palestine, to gain a desired view. Sudden and violent exercise always causes the body, and particularly the hands, to shake more or less, and to hold a bulky reflex camera steady under such conditions is almost a human impossibility.

My third trouble put the camera effectively out of action. I had not anticipated that the heat of Palestine in late May would be sufficient to damage the instrument (it was not a tropical model). Actually the woodwork began to shrink as soon as we landed on Syrian soil. Two very hot days at Tiberias, a day in the torrid depths of the Jordan Valley at Jericho and the Dead Sea made matters worse. The roller shutter absolutely refused to function and, as the negatives proved afterwards, the focus had gradually been getting worse, owing to the slight change in size of the camera caused by shrinkage, coupled with the use of a large aperture lens which always required to be critically sharp on the centre of interest.

For the last part of the trip I used my wife's camera and my troubles ceased, though I was handicapped by conditions of light in the Cairo bazaars, as I anticipated I should be.

All things considered, I came to the conclusion that a reflex was not the kind of instrument to take on a foreign tour. The next year when in the south of France I carried a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -plate Kodak with an F. 6.3 lens and compur shutter, and the results were perfectly satisfactory.

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I have given these rather trivial details because they show my own attempts to decide the most useful type of instrument to carry abroad.

To sum up, I consider the following to be essential requirements of equipment for a foreign trip.

(1) A small light camera of the folding type, preferably one that can be focused on a ground glass screen and has a frame finder as well as a brilliant one.

(2) A light folding stand.

(3) Films in preference to plates, either in the form of film packs or roll film, for three reasons, their light weight, because they can be changed in daylight, and there is no limit to the number which can be used in one day, except the capacity of one's pockets to carry and pay for them.

(4) Light filters.

(5) Exposure meter.

Films in all popular sizes can now be obtained practically in any place where tourists go. The same is not true of plates.

I do not advise letting any foreign D. & P. merchant handle exposures. There is never any guarantee that the results will be permanent owing to scamped fixing and washing.

It is not generally practical to carry developing gear owing to the lack of facilities in most hotels and the mess and bother that development entails when on tour. It is, however, most desirable to test results from time to time, so that one may be sure that the camera is functioning properly. This is best done by exposing a few films on subjects which do not matter much and letting the local D. & P. service do its worst.

Most holiday negatives of the pictorial worker fall into two groups. Firstly the results of button pressing and record work generally, acquaintances met en route, "stock" views,

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and similar subjects which one feels in duty bound to take and which may or may not be pictorial. Secondly, essentially pictorial subjects.

Personally I always find that good subjects seem to be far more numerous abroad than at home. This, of course, is not actually so but is due to the effect of novelty and strangeness ; architecture, scenery, manners and customs of the people, are all novel and for this reason perhaps make a stronger appeal to our artistic sense.

When travelling abroad you should adopt the scouts' slogan and "be prepared," for you never know when a magnificent subject will present itself. Always carry your camera, even if you are merely on some prosaic shopping expedition, for sure as "a cat's a pussy" if you leave it behind you will stumble upon a subject which may yield a masterpiece. It is not a bad plan to add a V.P. or similar instrument to the equipment for use when it is not desired to carry a larger camera.

Always be ready to act quickly. Admitted that it is much nicer to spend ample time over a composition, but if you see a likely subject take it before the chance slips by. Do not say to yourself, "I will return to-morrow and take this." To-morrow never comes, and if it did, the lighting would be different or the whole scene would be spoiled by some incongruous detail, an awkward-looking cart in the wrong place, a mass of washing hung out to dry or some other undesirable feature which it is impossible to remedy. Moral—always take a chance when it is offered.

Another point. Find out and always comply with local requirements, or you may easily land in trouble. For example in many of the near east countries Moslems have a rooted objection to unbelievers photographing their mosques. Don't do it unless you are sure no objection will be raised. Similarly

## PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR AMATEURS.

don't photograph military or naval works until you have ascertained if there are any anti-photographic restrictions in force.

In many picture galleries and museums photography is forbidden without permission. It is not worth while trying any "hanky-panky" in such places.

On one occasion at Pompeii I climbed on to the high ground at the outskirts of the excavation (the boundary wall of the city is, in fact, the best place to obtain a general view). I had taken my photograph and was descending once more when I was pounced upon by an irate official who demanded to know why I had "surmonte le mur" and entered the city without payment. It was a long time before I could convince him that I had been merely "Sur le mur."

See that your camera case has an efficient lock. Curious officials have a habit of tampering with cameras which local regulations demand shall be left in their care. I had such an experience at the old Seraglio at Constantinople when a batch of films was spoiled by some individual opening the film pack adapter during my absence. The lens too had a greasy thumb-mark on its outer surface.

Donkey boys and gharrie drivers are not always to be trusted, and similarly it is not wise to leave a camera or photographic material lying about in hotel bedrooms. Inquisitive domestics may do irreparable damage to one's collection of exposures.

If you are of a methodical turn of mind it is worth while keeping a record of photographs taken, together with details of light, stop exposure, etc. True this does not necessarily make one's pictorial work any better but such notes often prove very valuable on later occasions, particularly records of exposures and the names of subjects. It is easy enough to identify negatives two months, three months, or even six months after

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they have been made but in six years photographs of some remote spot may prove a difficult problem in identification if a list of exposures has not been kept. Personally I consider the Burroughs Wellcomes' Exposure Calculator and Diary ideal for this purpose. Space is provided for all details and there is the added advantage that the little handbook contains an excellent exposure meter.

In conclusion let me give a few Don'ts.

Don't waste plates or films trying to record vast distant views which appeal on account of their colour. The results are rarely satisfactory.

Don't try to take photographs from quickly moving vehicles such as trains, boats, motor cars, etc., with exposures of one twenty-fifth of a second. Even one five-hundredth of a second broadside on from a conveyance would probably show movement.

Don't leave cameras lying about unguarded ; things have a curious habit of disappearing from unattended railway carriages, hotel seats, motor cars, etc.

Don't travel without a camera stand.

Don't expect one twenty-fifth of a second at F.8 to give you a fully-exposed picture in a narrow Continental street at mid-day! It won't.

Don't rely upon getting supplies of films or plates in out-of-the-way places. Carry them with you or you may be disappointed.

Don't let impatient fellow travellers put you off a good subject. Get it even if you have to hurry over it, or better still risk their wrath and take your time.

Finally don't let these remarks deter you from carrying a camera whenever you travel abroad. Photography as a hobby is never more delightful than when helping you to make pictures of strange and interesting places.



#### XIV. CONTROL PROCESSES AND COMBINATION PRINTING.

Ever since the early days of photography there has been war between the advocates of "straight" photography and the "control" workers. Each side claims that their particular methods are the only correct ones whereby truly pictorial work can be produced.

My personal view is if you admit that photography is an artistic medium of expression and not merely a process for the scientific recording of certain facts, the manner in which a print is produced matters not one jot. The result is the only thing which counts and if you, the artist, can convey your message better by control methods you are at perfect liberty to do so and the final product will be just as much photographic art as an equally fine straight print.

One thing is certain, control methods undoubtedly give the worker added scope for artistic expression and consequently are of considerable value.

The most popular control processes are Bromoil and Bromoil Transfer, while many workers introduce hand work on negative or print, or modify their results by combination printing or the use of some diffusing medium in printing. Moreover by the use of a printing process such as Carbon, carbonyl, or the employment of tones and stains, subjects may be presented in any desired colour. The use of any of these methods is a perfectly legitimate photographic procedure, provided the result is satisfactory, but it must always be remembered that a good bromide is infinitely to be preferred to a bad bromoil.

It is not within the scope of the present work to enter into an exhaustive discourse on the technique of bromoil. There are a number of excellent handbooks on the market which give

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full instructions for practising this process, but for the benefit of those who do not know what bromoil is I will briefly explain the method.

A bromide print is prepared in the usual way and after thorough washing is immersed in a bleaching solution. This acts in such a manner that when the print is subsequently soaked in water of a certain temperature (about 75° F.) the emulsion swells in varying proportion to the light action. The print is removed from the warm water bath, and placed upon a hard surface such as a piece of plate glass and the moisture swabbed off.

A modified form of printer's ink specially prepared for bromoil is applied with a special brush by a dabbing motion, and "takes" on the swollen gelatine in proportion to the light action on the print—the heaviest shadows accepting most and the high-lights little or none. The final result is a print in which the tones are represented by a varying deposit of pigment.

In a "straight" bromoil the result will approximate in tone values very nearly to the original bromide print. By the use of a thinning medium for the ink and the manner of using the brush when pigmenting it is possible to apply a stronger tone to high-lights than they would normally accept, and alternatively shadows may be kept lighter than in the original print by withholding the pigment. This gives the worker power to modify the tone scale to a large degree, a power which in capable hands is most valuable. For the inexperienced worker there is the danger that the process will take charge of him instead of he being the master, with most disastrous results. The aim at first should be to make the bromoil as like the bromide print as possible, then when mastery of the process has been obtained, it is safe to attempt control effects.

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Well executed, a bromoil is a beautiful thing but a bad bromoil is, to say the least, unpleasant.

Bromoil transfer is the process carried a stage further. In this case the completed bromoil with the ink still wet is passed through an etcher's or similar press (the domestic mangle is employed by some workers) in contact with a piece of paper and the ink is so transferred to its new support.

The advantage of this process is that a print may be on any desired type of paper and in its production approximates as nearly as is possible in a photographic process to an etching or an engraving, moreover by re-inking several "pulls" may be taken from the same bromoil.

Control may be exercised by handwork both on the negative and the print to modify shadows and high-lights, the former being dealt with in the negative and the latter in the positive. Retouching is an art which can only be learned from experience, and is only justified when the handwork is not apparent in the finished production.

One worker of my acquaintance uses artists' oil colours, freely broken down with medium, to modify the tone values. The colour is of course chosen to harmonize with the colour of the print and a thin film is rubbed all over the surface of the photograph with a rag. Then by means of a clean rag either with or without the use of a solvent the colour is wiped off again in those parts where it is not required. In capable hands this method of control yields delightful results.

As previously mentioned prints may be made in almost any colour either by adopting a process such as Carbon or "Carbro," or by the use of tones and stains either singly or in combination.

Personally I think that a good warm black on a cream base is the most attractive finish for all subjects and a visit to any modern exhibition will show that the majority of workers



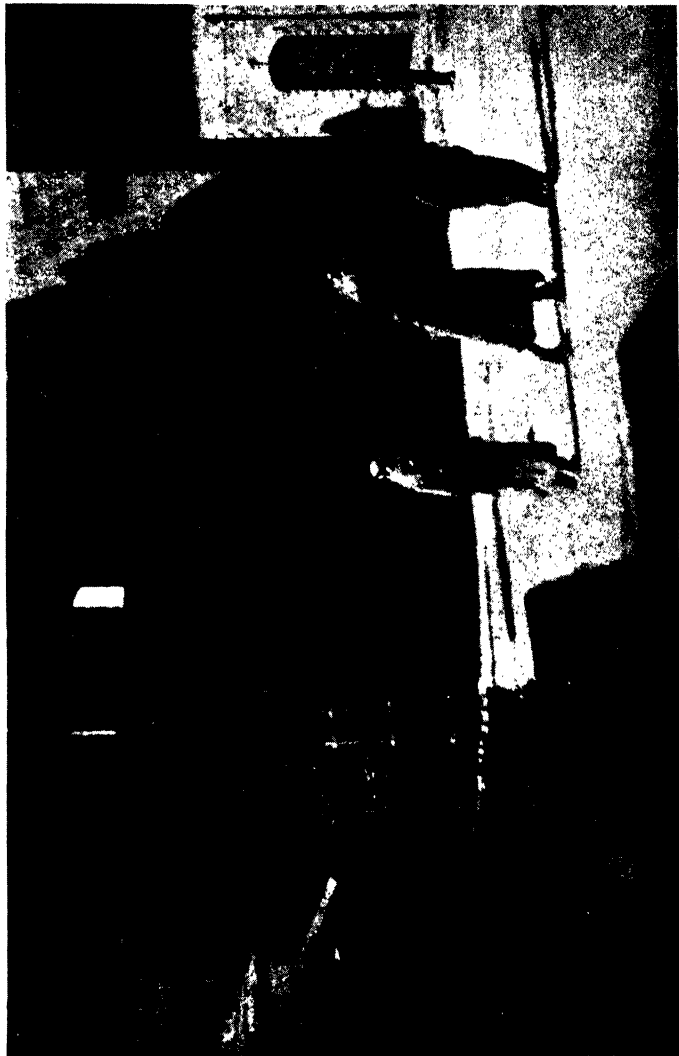
25. Venice
- 1 — Doge's Palace
  - 2 — Grand Canal
  - 3 — A Side Canal
  - 4 — Beneath the Rialto
  - 5 — The Steps of Sta Maria della Salute
  - 6 — The Broken Fountain
  - 7 — A Sunlit Canal



26. The Light of the Crescent

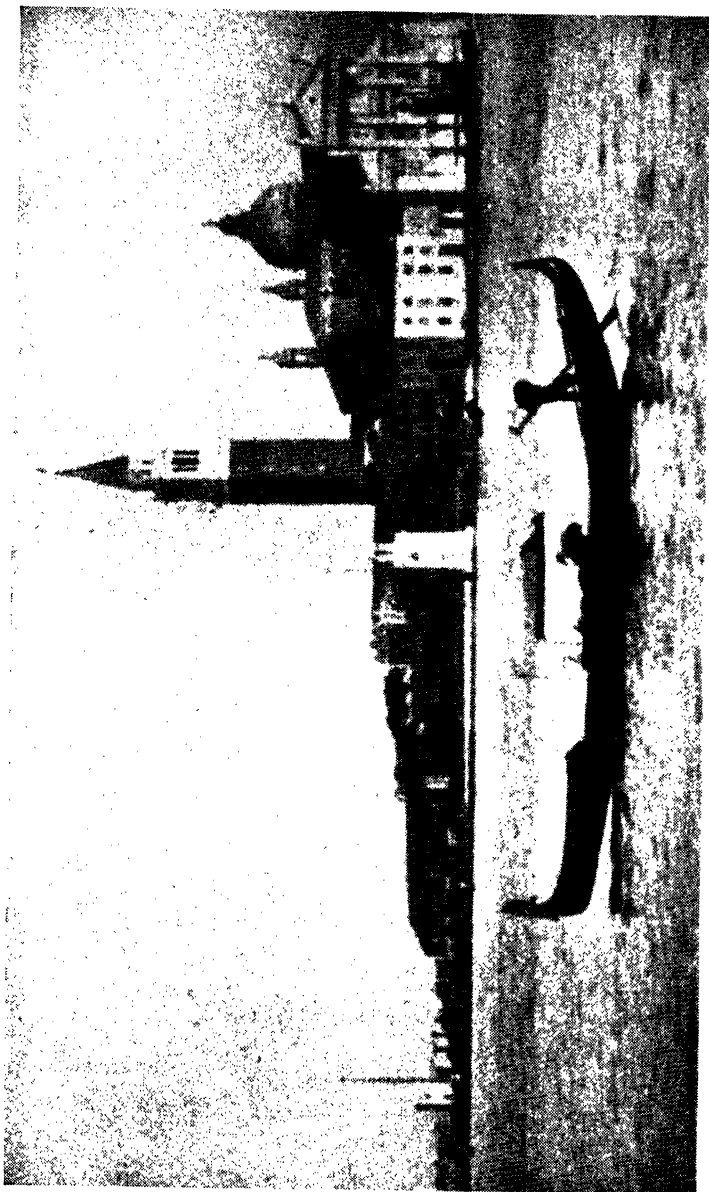




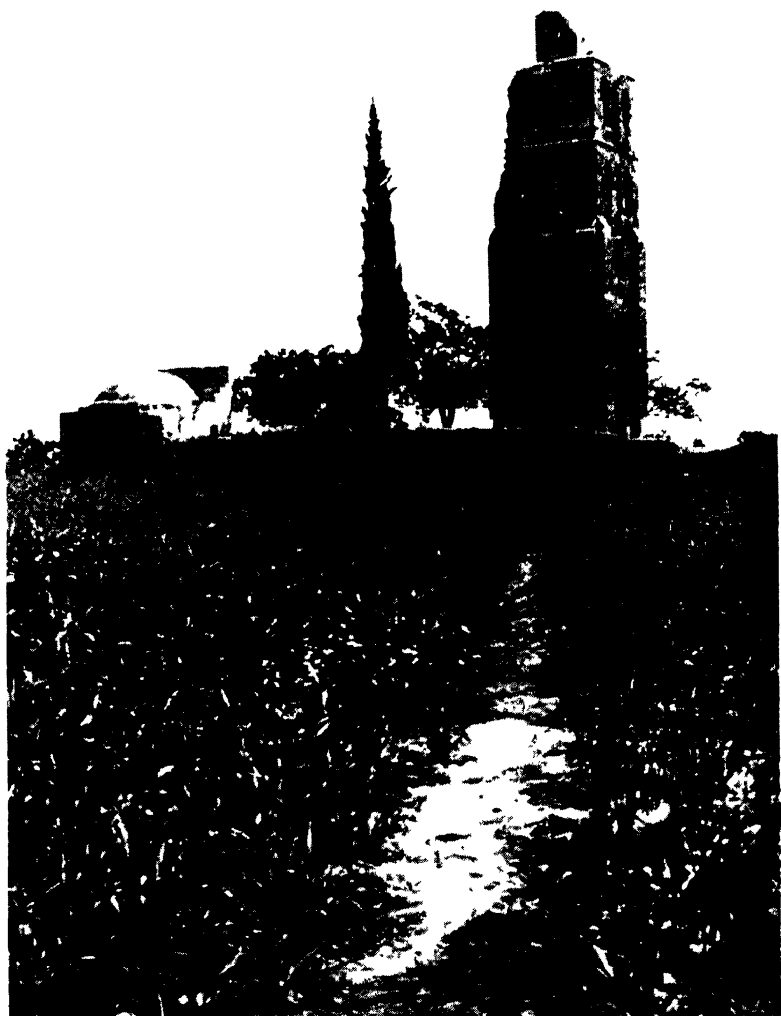


29. Damascus Gate, Jerusalem





30. Guidecca, Venice



31. The White Tower, Ramleh, Palestine



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favour this treatment, colour being reserved for lantern slides which range from chalk red to cold black and through all the tones of blues and greens.

With care excellent results may be obtained by combining two or more negatives when printing by an enlarger. This is useful in landscape work when it is desired to introduce clouds into a " bald " sky.

Often an otherwise delightful photograph is spoiled by the emptiness of its sky and generally this may be remedied by printing in clouds. All that is required for the work is taste in selecting suitable negatives and a certain manual dexterity during printing.

Needless to say it is essential that the sky negative should be lit from the same direction as the foreground, whilst the conditions should harmonise; that is to say a stormy sky should not be introduced into an obviously peaceful landscape, or a wind-swept belt of trees combined with a quiet sunset. If a sheet of water occupies the foreground particular care must be taken that lack of sky reflections on the surface does not disclose the fact that combination printing has been resorted to.

When adding a sky the easiest type of foreground is one which possesses a more or less unbroken line near the level of the horizon. If a dark object such as an isolated church tower or a tree breaks this line it is generally perfectly safe to print the cloud negative over it without masking. But if the sky line is very much broken it may be necessary to make a mask by drawing the outline on a card, cutting along the line and using each half to screen respectively the foreground and the sky during printing.

In either case the procedure is the same. Test strips are first made of each negative and the correct exposure ascertained in the usual way. The position of the horizon or other

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strong line is marked on the enlarging easel and the foreground is then printed, a card being held over the sky portion so as to act as a screen a few inches in front of the easel and kept moving slightly so that it does not form a hard outline.

The paper is removed and placed under cover while the foreground negative is replaced by the sky negative in the enlarger. Do not forget to put some small distinguishing mark on the printing paper so that you may know which is the upper and which is the lower portion when replacing it on the easel.

When all is ready the foreground portion is screened by the card and the sky exposure made. The print is then developed in the normal way.

At first it may be necessary to make two or three attempts before a satisfactory print is obtained but after a little practice the manipulation will be found to be quite easy and one which will often prove useful.

Sometimes a foreground may be combined with the distance of another negative or the method may be used to introduce a figure into a landscape, success being mainly a question of manipulative skill plus taste in the choice of subjects. In fact three or even more negatives may be successfully combined if the worker has the requisite skill and patience.

With the more complicated combination printing luck enters largely into the chances of success. It is not always possible to produce two prints exactly alike. In cases where the work has been of a particularly difficult nature and the desired result achieved it is well worth while to copy the print on a process plate so that duplicates may be printed from the new negative.

Needless to say an artificial light enlarger is necessary for this work, a daylight enlarger is of little use for the purpose; in fact, the latter instrument is of small value to the keen

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amateur who takes his hobby seriously because it too greatly limits his powers of manipulation during printing.

There are several other tricks in printing which the amateur will learn by experience. Aggressive high-lights may be toned down by using a card with a small hole in it and locally giving longer exposure. Similarly by using a card as a mask some parts of a negative may be printed more deeply than others, while it often adds to the pictorial effect to print the corners of a composition deeper than the rest.

Bolting cloth or bolting silk, which is a fine regular texture material used for sifting flour, is by some workers employed to give softness of definition in a print. The cloth is stretched on to a wooden frame and interposed between the enlarger and the easel either in contact with the paper—when the resulting print has an appearance of canvas texture—or away from it when the image becomes more or less diffused according to the distance of the cloth from the paper.

Varying effects may be obtained by making half the exposure without the cloth and the other half with it, or it may be moved backwards and forwards. The use of this cloth may increase the exposure by a third or more according to the effect desired.

A pleasant diffusion of the image may also be obtained by making part of an exposure in sharp focus and then racking the enlarger slightly out of focus.

In concluding this chapter let me again emphasise the point that any or all methods of modifying a print are perfectly legitimate if warranted by the result. Some people have called control and manipulation in photography “faking” but it is no more faking or opposed to art than the personal tricks by which a painter obtains original effects. The end in this connection certainly justifies the means.

## XV. TRIMMING AND MOUNTING PRINTS.

It is only on rare occasions that a print cannot be improved by judicious trimming. Sometimes a composition will gain enormously in effect by the removal of a stretch of uninteresting foreground or some undesirable feature on the right or left hand side. It may be necessary to trim a print so as to throw the point of interest out of centre, while certain subjects will be found to gain greatly by the removal of all the sky.

It is most difficult to judge just how much of a negative should be included when projected on the enlarging easel and it is always better to include the whole and decide the final shape of the print by trimming.

As an aid to decision in this matter two "L" shaped pieces of card should be cut and used as masks. These can be moved backwards and forwards over the print and the effect of any given shape noted. When the best result has been obtained the position of the boundaries can be marked and the print trimmed accordingly.

The best form of trimmer is a board with a guillotine knife attached. Across the end is a rule set at right angles to the knife so that there is no difficulty in cutting the angles dead square.

Alternatively a trimming knife, a sharp pen knife or an old razor blade may be used, cutting being done on a sheet of plate glass or other hard substance, and a steel set-square used to obtain "true" angles.

Even if no trimming is necessary to improve the composition it is always well to sharpen up the edges of a print by a "shaving trim" as they inevitably get more or less knocked about during development, fixing and washing.

However good a photograph and its subject may be it

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cannot be seen to the best advantage unless it is tastefully mounted.

There are many ways of mounting a print, and it is necessary to choose the manner most suited to the subject. First, with regard to the adhesive used. The most satisfactory of all is the dry mounting method. In this a special dry mounting tissue (which is prepared with shellac but is best obtained commercially) is touched with a hot iron and immediately placed in contact with the back of the print when the spot affected by the heat will adhere to the paper. Print and tissue are then trimmed together either with a knife or preferably with a guillotine, and placed in position on the selected mount. The surface of the print is covered with a sheet of clean paper and the whole "sandwich" subjected to heat, either by means of a hot flat iron or under pressure in a heated press made for the purpose. The heat must be just sufficient to melt the shellac, which results in perfect adhesion between print and mount.

The great advantage of the process is that being "dry" there is no expansion and contraction in either print or mount, with the result that there is no tendency for the latter to curl or cockle even when a print on thick card is attached to a thin mount.

The only disadvantage is that a very large press is necessary to deal with big prints and mounts while it is not easy to get perfect adhesion over a large surface if a flat iron is used.

The simplest way of mounting prints is to use a paste adhesive, but unfortunately mountants used for general purposes are unsuitable as they contain substances harmful to the photographic image and may seriously affect its permanency. Moreover most adhesives contain so much moisture that the print swells when they are applied, and the inevitable contraction which takes place later causes the mount to curl.



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There are several photographic mounting pastes on the market which contain the minimum of moisture in their composition and are photographically pure, and if it is impossible to employ the dry mounting process one of these should be used.

The print is laid face downwards on a piece of clean paper and the paste applied quickly with a stiff brush. As soon as it has been spread evenly all over the back the print is placed on the mount, the exact position of the corners having been marked previously in pencil. Adhesion may be secured by using a roller squeegee, or if, as in my own case, an old letter copying press is available the print and mount may be inserted between the pages of a book and placed under pressure for an hour or so. I find this method is particularly useful when there is any chance of cockling as the pressure keeps both flat. Moreover if photographically pure blotting paper is used to protect the print and its mount and changed every two or three hours any slight moisture will be absorbed and the mount may be guaranteed to remain perfectly flat.

Great care must be taken not to get any of the paste on the surface of the print ; sometimes however a little surplus mountant is squeezed out round the edges and may adhere to the blotting paper or the pages of the book in which it is pressed.

If this should happen it is best to leave matters as they are until the print is quite dry. Then with a moistened finger very carefully damp the affected edges and it will be found that the dry paste or any small fluffy bits of paper can be wiped or peeled off the surface without causing damage.

Some workers prefer to paste down the top edge only of the print, or even the two top corners, and this method is perfectly satisfactory provided the resultant picture is to be shown behind glass. Here again it is most desirable to allow the mountant to dry out under pressure to avoid cockling.

Mounts require to be selected with discrimination so that

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they may harmonise with the colours of the print. It is possible to purchase made-up mounts either of the "stick on" or "slip in" variety, but most of these commercial productions give the work a horribly "cheap" appearance which no serious photographer would tolerate. It is better in every way to prepare your own mounts. The best material for the purpose is mounting card specially prepared for photographic purposes, as it is free from hypo or other harmful impurities. Messrs. Barton, of Birmingham, make a speciality of this, and have a large range of cards finished to a different tint on each side, which is a great help in choosing the most desirable shade. In cases where absolute permanency is not of great importance, almost any card may be used. For thinner mounts nothing looks better than Whatman's drawing paper, either "rough," "mat" or "hot pressed," according to the texture desired, and this will be found quite free from impurities. However, almost any drawing paper of good quality, texture and colour will do.

A great range of papers is to be obtained from any of the dealers in etching materials, Japanese, Indian, Dutch, and hand-made English, in delightful shades of cream and buff. Many of these are admirably suited to photographic mounting, but some are very thin, particularly the Japanese, and require to be "dry mounted."

Almost all the photographic exhibitions insist upon standard-sized mounts for all entries so that the effect of the exhibition, when hung, shall not be spoiled by pictures of irregular shape, while white or light-toned mounts are desired, although not insisted upon. The sizes for British Exhibitions are 25ins. x 20ins., 20ins. x 16ins. and 15ins. x 12ins. It is well therefore, when mounting prints, to conform to these sizes whether they are intended for exhibition or not, as it enables all your best prints to be kept together in three portfolios,

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while a few frames may be hung on the walls and the photographs changed from time to time.

Modern fashion in mounts is now all in favour of light-toned ones. White is rather cold for most subjects and a light cream is perhaps the most attractive shade. Toned prints, particularly if inclined to red or ginger, do not look so well as black and white, or preferably black and cream which gives an air of warmth and a suggestion of sunlight to the high-lights. An exception to this is snow scenes which are best printed on a white base paper. In any case the effect should be judged under a sheet of glass, the addition of which materially alters the tints of print and mount.

If the personal preference is for coloured mounts, the colours must tone with the print. It is a fatal mistake to put a cold-toned print, grey and white for example, on a warm-coloured mount such as cream, or a sepia-toned cream base print upon a grey mount.

Some years ago multiple mounts, in which cards of varying shades of the same colour were imposed one upon the other so as to show margins, were in fashion, but modern taste demands a simpler form of mounting.

This may consist of the base card and one thickness of additional card to form a margin round the print. A single sheet, plate marked to receive the print, is always an effective treatment. If an etching press is available a plate mark of the necessary size is easily made by passing the print with a card cut to the necessary dimensions through the press.

An alternative method is to place the mount face downwards on a sheet of glass with a card, the size of the plate mark desired, beneath and using a blunt instrument such as a bone or ivory paper knife or even your thumb nail, to work round the card with considerable pressure. It will be found perfectly easy to mark the mount if the thickness is not too great.

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When the print is on double weight paper or card base the same method may be employed, using the print in the place of the card after mounting, the result being to bring the surface of the print and its mount into the same plane.

Still another form of mounting is to follow the method of exhibiting etchings. In this case the card must be twice the size of the finished mount. With a sharp penknife *nearly* cut through the card along a centre line so that it may be easily bent in half. The print must be made with a fairly wide white margin, say  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. for the sides and top and 1 in. at the bottom. As the print cannot be trimmed it must be masked to the desired size during enlarging. The mount is then cut out to a size slightly less than the overall dimensions of the print which is attached by paste to the back portion of the mount.

The position of the print on the mount must be decided according to the shape of the former. There should always be a greater area of mount below than at the sides and top. Except perhaps in the case of a very long and narrow horizontal print the sides and top should be equal.

Very few subjects are suited to other than a rectangular treatment and ovals and circles should be avoided unless the lines of the composition definitely demand one of these shapes. It is not desirable to mount a print out of centre on the mount *i.e.*, in one corner, angle-wise, or in any other "fancy" manner which suggests affectation.

Finally a few words about titles. A good title never saved a really bad print but a bad title has often spoiled a good one. Do not choose long involved pieces of poetry to describe a print. "The farewell light blends with the solemn colouring of the night" sort of thing. Long titles are annoying, take up too much space in an exhibition catalogue and cannot be inscribed within reasonable limits on a mount. Four words are ample.

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Obvious and often used titles should be avoided. "A Misty Morning," "Sunset," "The Farm Yard," "Study of a Woman," etc., the subjects of such prints being perfectly clear without these over-worked descriptions.

Architectural photographs should have explanatory titles because our interest is aroused as much by the record as by the pictorial rendering, so that "S. Mark's, Venice," "Leaning Tower, Pisa," "Nave, Canterbury Cathedral," are perfectly suitable. Similarly record and scientific work and nature photography generally requires some explanation such as "Partridge in Flight" or "Blackbird on Nest."

In portraits it is generally better to name the sitter rather than to title a print simply "Portrait."

Where the whole interest in a print lies in its pictorialism it is important that an apt and, to use a popular slang phrase, "snappy" title should be found which by its appropriateness will emphasise the message the print has to convey. A study of titles below the illustrations of this work will show my own attempts to solve this problem.

Titles, to improve and not spoil a print, must be beautifully inscribed on the mount. A badly written title will quite mar the appearance of the best photographic work.

It is a good thing to practise "lettering," choosing an alphabet of simple characters. Open block letters look as well as any. Always work between faintly pencilled lines, and above all cultivate neatness.

In addition to the title, photographs may be signed or the worker may evolve a simple and neat monogram, which can be easily drawn, to identify his prints.

Neatness in mounting amply repays the necessary time and trouble involved and moreover the final effect of a composition can never be adequately judged until it is seen mounted and under glass.

In the previous chapters it has been my endeavour to indicate some of the ways whereby the photographic beginner may follow his quest of the pictorial. The path is by no means easy. There are many pitfalls, inevitably disappointments will be met, but the end is so eminently worth while that passing troubles should be regarded lightly and only serve as spurs to greater effort. Once a camera user feels the lure of the pictorial he falls under a spell which is likely to hold him for the rest of his days. To be able to produce work which is really beautiful to look upon and which gives genuine pleasure to others is no mean achievement and this is a power which photography affords if the medium is used rightly and reasonable time, thought and care is bestowed upon it.

Whether the ultimate object is to produce pictorial work for personal satisfaction or to give pleasure to others it is well to take advantage of such opportunities as arise for exhibiting the results of one's labours in competition with the work of others. I have already drawn attention to the value of regularly submitting prints to the competitions organized by the photographic press. Many a novice has been encouraged to do better work by winning an award in a beginners' class, while the fact of carrying off a premier award in an advanced workers' class indicates a standard of attainment, which is an important milestone on the road to success. Moreover as the entry to such competitions usually carries the privilege of having the prints criticised by an expert it is doubly worth while.

On the other hand "pot hunting" when the monetary value of the award, and not pictorial attainment, is the goal, cannot be too strongly deprecated.

The real test of ability comes when the worker submits

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the results of his labours to an open exhibition. Photographic exhibitions range from the simple club affair restricted to members, with probably beginners and advanced workers' classes, to the large International shows which ruthlessly exclude all but the finest work so that to have a print accepted is a really high honour. The more important the show the fewer are the awards, medals and certificates offered, and the object of all pictorial workers should be to have prints accepted by those which are the most rigid in their selection.

Among British exhibitions the two most important are those of the Royal Photographic Society and the London Salon of Photography both of which are held in London in the early Autumn. At the former all branches of photography are represented, pictorial (including lantern slides and colour transparencies), technical and cinematography, while the latter is restricted to pictorial prints only. Print selection is the more ruthless at the "Royal" for wall space is limited, but at both shows the level of work is of a very high order. It should therefore be the aim of every amateur eventually to have prints hung by one or both of these exhibitions.

It may not be out of place to give a few hints about submitting work.

(1) Always read the rules on the entry form carefully and comply with them to the letter. Non-compliance throws additional work upon harassed exhibition officials and may result in the entries being disqualified.

(2) See that your mounts are the regulation size, light in colour and clean. Personally I never attach the whole of a print to its support but only the top edge; all large exhibitions show prints under glass so that they appear flat with the mount whether they are completely attached or not and by fixing along the top edge only it is possible to change the outer mount when it becomes dirty or dog-eared.

## CONCLUSION.

(3) Make sure that your name and address and the title of the picture are on the back.

(4) Keep a stock of suitable boards of plywood or very stout cardboard for packing prints and interpose tissue paper between each print.

(5) Don't forget to enclose the necessary amount for return carriage.

(6) When you achieve a success don't keep the same subject on the road for years, sending it on from one exhibition to another. Try out a new print and prove to yourself that you can keep up your standard of work. Don't submit a print which is well known at provincial shows, or through the medium of reproduction in the photographic press, to big exhibitions like the "Royal" or "Salon"; new works are wanted there and stale efforts will not be hung.

(7) Never submit any work to a competition or exhibition you do not conscientiously feel to be the best you are able to do.

There was once a member of a photographic club to which I belonged who maintained that the ultimate test of a good photograph was for the producer to hang it on the walls of his home for a year and if at the end of that time the print still gave him as much pleasure as when he first produced it, it had passed the most critical of all tests.

I hand on this piece of advice and so bring this small book to a close. I have written as an amateur to amateurs trying to point the way as others have pointed it to me or I have found it for myself. Art is something which cannot be taught, ultimately it is the power to see and recognise beauty, but there are certain guides and ways of approach which help us to gain this power and it is well to accept such fortuitous aids.

Photography, one of the youngest of the arts, is also



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the finest of all hobbies ; one which can be followed at all times of the year and in any part of the globe, it gives pleasure to others as well as to ourselves and if once the initial stages can be passed the lure of greater achievements will always hold the worker. If therefore you are a " button presser " who has been forbearing enough to read so far, let me, as a last word, urge you to follow the trail of the pictorial workers for I am certain you will never regret it.

THE END.

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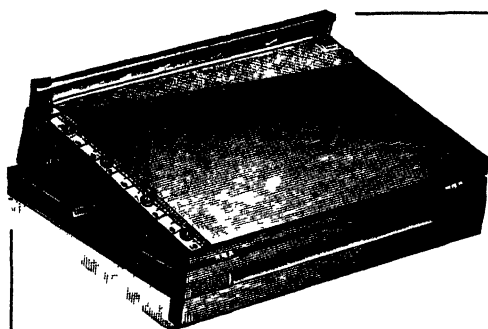
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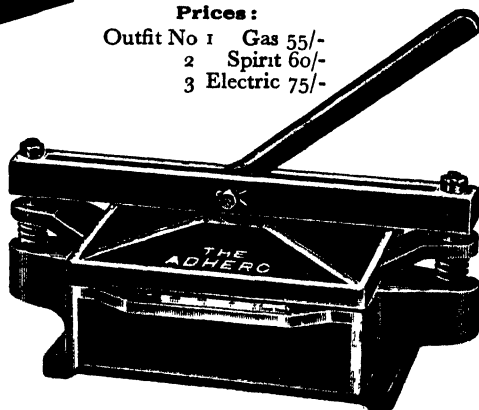
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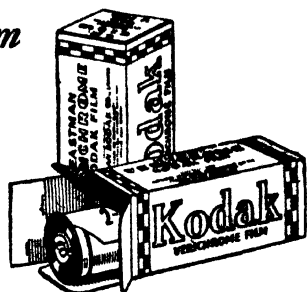
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